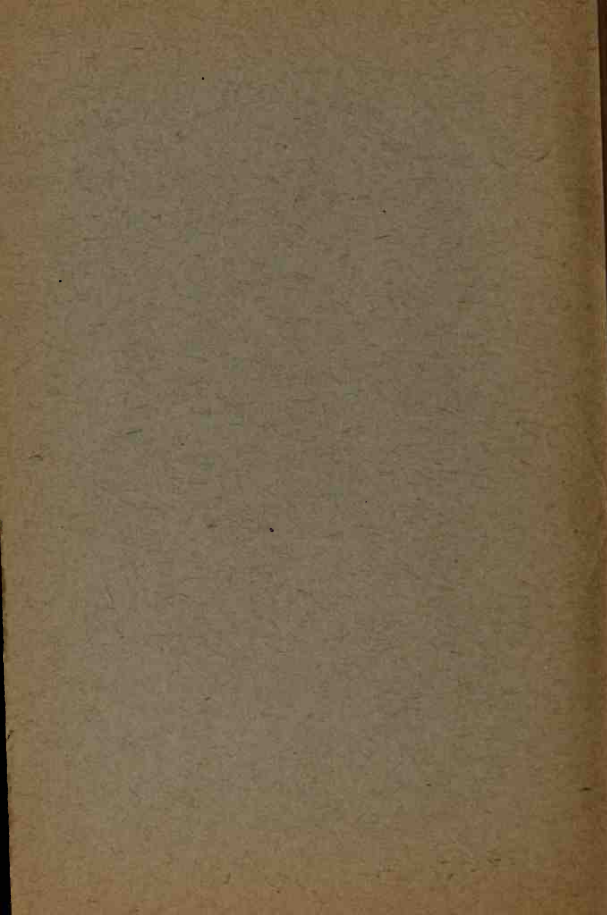


LITTLE BLUE BOOK NO. 330  
Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius

# Dante's Inferno

Volume II



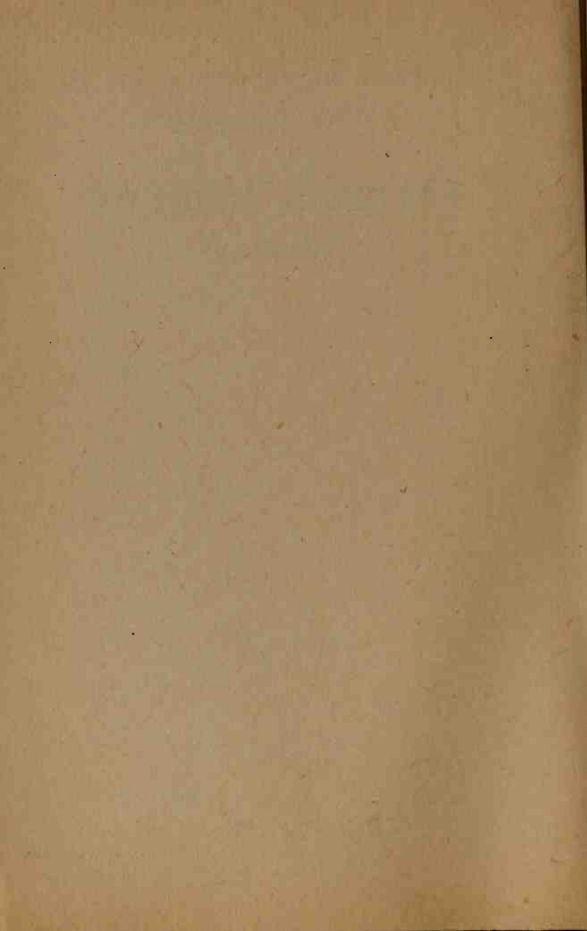
**TEN CENT POCKET SERIES NO. 330**

**Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius.**

# **Dante's Inferno**

**Volume II**

**HALDEMAN-JULIUS COMPANY  
GIRARD, KANSAS**





# DANTE'S INFERNO.

## CANTO XVIII.

There is a place within the depths of hell  
Called Malebolge, all of rock dark-stained  
With hue ferruginous, e'en as the steep  
That round it circling winds. Right in the  
midst

Of that abominable region yawns  
A spacious gulf profound, whereof the frame  
Due time shall tell. The circle, that remains,  
Throughout its round, between the gulf and  
base

Of the high craggy banks, successive forms  
Ten bastions, in its hollow bottom raised.

As where, to guard the walls, full many a  
foss

Begirds some stately castle, sure defence  
Affording to the space within; so here  
Were modelled these: and as like fortresses,  
E'en from their threshold to the brink without,  
Are flanked with bridges; from the rock's low  
base

Thus flinty paths advanced, that 'cross the  
moles

And dikes struck onward far as to the gulf,  
That in one bound collected cuts them off,

Such was the place, wherein we found ourselves

From Geryon's back dislodged. The bard to left

Held on his way, and I behind him moved.

On our right hand new misery I saw,  
New pains, new executioners of wrath,  
That swarming peopled the first chasm. Below  
Were naked sinners. Hitherward they came,  
Meeting our faces, from the middle point;  
With us beyond, but with a larger stride,  
E'en thus the Romans, when the year returns  
Of Jubilee, with better speed to rid

The thronging multitudes, their means devise  
For such as pass the bridge; that on one side  
All front toward the castle, and approach  
Saint Peter's fane, on the other towards the  
mount.

Each diverse way, along the grisly rock,  
Horned demons I beheld, with lashes huge,  
That on their back unmercifully smote.  
Ah! how they made them bound at the first  
stripe!

None for the second waited, nor the third.

Meantime, as on I passed, one met my sight,  
Whom soon as viewed, "Of him," cried I,  
"not yet

Mine eye hath had his fill." I therefore stayed  
My feet to scan, and the teacher kind  
Paused with me, and consented I should walk  
Backward a space; and the tormented spirit,  
Who thought to hide him, bent his visage down.  
But it availed him naught; for I exclaimed:

"Thou who does cast thine eye upon the ground,

Unless thy features do belie thee much,  
Venedico art thou. But what brings thee  
Into this bitter seasoning?" He replied:

"Unwillingly I answer to thy words.

But thy clear speech, that to my mind recalls  
The world I once inhabited, constrains me,  
Know then 'twas I who led fair Ghisola  
To do the Marquis' will, however fame  
The shameful tale have bruited. Nor alone  
Bologna hither sendeth me to mourn.

Rather with us the place is so o'erthronged,  
That not so many tongues this day are taught,  
Betwixt the Reno and Savena's stream,  
To answer *Sipa* in their country's phrase.  
And if of that securer proof thou need,  
Remember but our craving thirst for gold."

Him speaking thus, a demon with his thong  
Struck and exclaimed, "Away, corrupter! here  
Women are none for sale." Forthwith I joined  
My escort, and few paces thence we came  
To where a rock forth issued from the bank.  
That easily ascended, to the right  
Upon its splinter turning, we depart  
From those eternal barriers. When arrived  
Where, underneath, the gaping arch lets pass  
The scourged souls: "Pause here," the teacher  
said,

"And let these others miserable now  
Strike on thy ken; faces not yet beheld,  
For that together they with us have walked."

From the old bridge we eyed the pack, who  
came

From the other side toward us, like the rest,  
Excoriate from the lash. My gentle guide,  
By me unquestioned, thus his speech resumed:  
"Behold that lofty shade, who this way tends,  
And seems too woe-begone to drop a tear.  
How yet the regal aspect he retains!

Jason is he, whose skill and prowess won  
The ram from Colchis. To the Lemnian isle  
His passage thither led him, when those bold  
And pitiless women had slain all their males.  
There he with tokens and fair witching words  
Hypsipyle beguiled, a virgin young,  
Who first had all the rest herself beguiled.  
Impregnated, he left her there forlorn.  
Such is the guilt condemns him to this pain.  
Here too Medea's injuries are avenged.  
All bear him company, who like deceit  
To his have practised. And thus much to know  
Of the first vale suffice thee, and of those  
Whom its keen torments urge." Now had we  
come

Where, crossing the next pier, the straitened  
path

Bestrides its shoulders to another arch.

Hence, in the second chasm we heard the  
ghosts,

Who gibber in low melancholy sounds,  
With wide-stretched nostrils snort, and on  
themselves

Smit with their palms. Upon the banks a  
scurf,

From the foul steam condensed, encrusting  
hung,

That held sharp combat with the sight and  
smell.

So hollow is the depth, that from no part,  
Save on the summit of the rocky span,  
Could I distinguish aught. Thus far we came;  
And thence I saw, within the foss below,  
A crowd immersed in ordure, that appeared  
Druff of the human body. There beneath  
Searching with eye inquisitive, I marked  
One with his head so grimed, 'twere hard to  
deem

If he were clerk or layman. Loud he cried:  
"Why greedily thus bendest more on me,  
Than on these other filthy one, thy ken?"

"Because, if true my memory," I replied,  
"I heretofore have seen thee with dry locks,  
And thou Alessio art, of Lucca sprung.  
Therefore than all the rest I scan thee more."

Then beating on his brain, these words he  
spake:

"Me thus low down my flatteries have sunk,  
Wherewith I ne'er enough could glut my  
tongue."

My leader thus: "A little further stretch  
Thy face, that thou the visage well mayst note  
Of that besotted, sluttish courtezan,  
Who there doth rend her with defiled nails,  
Now crouching down, now risen on her feet.  
Thais is this, the harlot, whose false lip  
'Answered her doting paramour that asked,  
'Thankest me much!'—'Say rather, wondrously,'  
And, seeing this, here satiate be our view."

## CANTO XIX.

Woe to thee, Simon Magus! woe to you,  
His wretched followers! who the things of God,

Which should be wedded unto goodness, them,  
Rapacious as ye are, do prostitute  
For gold and silver in adultery.

Now must the trumpet sound to you, since  
yours

Is the third chasm. Upon the following vault  
We now had mounted, where the rock impends  
Directly o'er the centre of the foss.

Wisdom Supreme! how wonderful the art,  
Which thou dost manifest in heaven, in earth,  
And in the evil world, how just a meed  
Allotting by thy virtue unto all.

I saw the livid stone, throughout the sides  
And in its bottom full of apertures,  
All equal in their width, and circular each.  
Nor ample less nor larger they appeared  
Than, in Saint John's fair dome of me be-  
loved,

Those framed to hold the pure baptismal  
streams,

One of the which I brake, some few years past,  
To save a whelming infant; and be this  
A seal to undeceive whoever doubts

The motive of my deed. From out the mouth  
Of every one emerged a sinner's feet,  
And of the legs high upward as the calf.

The rest beneath was hid. On either foot  
The soles were burning; whence the flexile  
joints

Glanced with such violent motion, as had snapt  
Asunder cords or twisted withs. As flame,  
Feeding on unctuous matter, glides along  
The surface, scarcely touching where it moves;  
So here, from heel to point, glided the flames.

"Master! say who is he, than all the rest

Glancing in fiercer agony, on whom  
A ruddier flame doth prey?" I thus inquired.

"If thou be willing," he replied, "that I  
Carry thee down, where least the slope bank  
falls,

He of himself shall tell thee, and his wrongs."

I then: "As pleases thee, to me is best.

Thou art my lord; and know'st that ne'er I  
quit

Thy will: what silence hides, that knowest  
thou."

Thereat on the fourth pier we came, we  
turned,

And on our left descended to the depth,

A narrow strait, and perforated close,

Nor from his side my leader set me down,

Till to his orifice he brought whose limb

Quivering expressed his pang. "Whoe'er thou  
art,

Sad spirit! thus reversed, and as a stake

Driven in the soil," I in these words began;

"If thou be able, utter forth thy voice."

There stood I like the friar, that dost shrive  
A wretch for murder doomed, who, e'en when  
fixed,

Calleth him back whence death awhile delays.

He shouted: "Ha! already standest there?  
Already standest there, O Boniface!

By many a year the writing played me false.

So early dost thou surfeit with the wealth,

For which thou fearedst not in guile to take

The lovely lady, and then mangle her?

I felt as those who, piercing not the drift  
Of answer made them, stand as if exposed  
In mockery, nor know what to reply;

When Virgil thus admonished: "Tell him quick.

"I am not he, not he whom thou believest." And I, as was enjoined me, straight replied, That heard, the spirit all did wrench his feet, And, sighing, next in woeful accent spake: "What then of me requirest? If to know So much imports thee, who I am, that thou Hast therefore down the bank descended, learn That in the mighty mantle I was robed, And of a she-bear was indeed the son, So eager to advance my whelps, that there My having in my purse above I stowed, And here myself. Under my head are dragged The rest, my predecessors in the guilt Of simony. Stretched at their length, they lie Along an opening in the rock. 'Midst them I also low shall fall, soon as he comes, For whom I took thee, when so hastily I questioned. But already longer time Hath past, since my soles kindled, and I thus Upright have stood, than in his doom to stand

Planted with fiery feet. For after him, One yet of deeds more ugly shall arrive. From forth the west, a shepherd without law, Fated to cover both his form and mine. He a new Jason shall be called, of whom In Maccabees we read; and favor such As to that priest his king indulgent showed, Shall be of France's monarch shown to him."

I know not if I here too far presumed, But in this strain I answered: "Tell me now What treasures from Saint Peter at the first Our Lord demanded, when he put the keys



Into his charge? Surely he asked no more  
But 'follow me!' Nor Peter, nor the rest,  
Or gold or silver of Matthias took,  
When lots were cast upon the forfeit place  
Of the condemned soul. Abide thou then:  
Thy punishment of right is merited:  
And look thou well to that ill-gotten coin,  
Which against Charles thy hardihood inspired.  
If reverence of the keys restrained me not,  
Which thou in happier time didst hold, I yet  
Severer speech might use. Your avarice  
O'ercasts the world with mourning, under  
foot

Treading the good, and raising bad men up.  
Of shepherds like to you, the Evangelist  
Was ware, when her, who sits upon the waves,  
With kings in filthy whoredom he upheld;  
She who with seven heads towered at her  
birth,

And from ten horns her proof of glory drew,  
Long as her spouse in virtue took delight.  
Of gold and silver ye have made your god,  
Differing wherein from the idolater,  
But that he worships one, a hundred ye?  
Ah, Constantine! to how much ill gave birth,  
Not thy conversion, but that plenteous dower,  
Which the first wealthy Father gained from  
thee."

Meanwhile, as thus I sung, he, whether wrath  
Or conscience smote him violent upsprang  
Spinning on either sole. I do believe  
My teacher well was pleased, with so composed  
A lip he listened ever to the sound  
Of the true words I uttered. In both arms  
He caught, and, to his bosom lifting me,

Upward retraced the way of his descent.

Nor weary of his weight, he pressed me close,  
Till to the summit of the rock we came,  
Our passage from the fourth to the fifth pier.  
His cherished burden there gently he placed  
Upon the rugged rock and steep, a path  
Not easy for the clambering goat to mount.

Thence to my view another vale appeared.

## CANTO XX.

And now the verse proceeds to torments new,  
Fit argument of this the twentieth strain  
Of the first song, whose awful theme records  
The spirits whelmed in woe. Earnest I looked  
Into the depth, that opened to my view,  
Moistened with tears of anguish, and beheld  
A tribe, that came along the hollow vale,  
In silence weeping: such their step as walk  
Quires, chanting solemn litanies, on earth.

As on them more direct mine eye descends,  
Each wonderously seemed to be reversed  
At the neck-bone, so that the countenance  
Was from the reins averted; and because  
None might before him look, they were compelled

To advance with backward gait. Thus one  
perhaps

Hath seen by force of palsy clean transposed,  
But I ne'er saw it nor believe it so.

Now, reader! think within thyself, so God  
Fruit of thy reading give thee! how I long  
Could keep my visage dry, when I beheld

Near me our form distorted in such guise,  
That on the hinder parts fallen from the face  
The tears down-streaming rolled. Against a  
rock

I leant and wept, so that my guide exclaimed:  
"What, and are thou, too, witless as the rest?  
Here pity most doth show herself alive,  
When she is dead. What guilt exceedeth his,  
Who with Heaven's judgment in his passion  
strives?

Raise up thy head, raise up, and see the man  
Before whose eyes earth gaped in Thebes, when  
all

Cried out 'Amphiaraus, whither rushest?  
Why leavest thou the war?' He not the less  
Fell ruining far as to Minos down,  
Whose grapple none eludes. Lo! how he makes  
The breast his shoulders; and who once too far  
Before him wished to see, now backward looks,  
And treads reverse his path. Tiresias note,  
Who semblance changed, when woman he be-  
came

Of male, through every limb transformed; and  
then

Once more behoved him with his rod to strike  
The two entwining serpents, ere the plumes,  
That marked the better sex, might shoot again.

"Aruns, with rere his belly facing, comes,  
On Luni's mountains, midst the marbles white,  
Where delves Carrara's hind, who wones be-  
neath,

A cavern was his dwelling, whence the stars  
And main-sea wide in boundless view he held.

"The next, whose loosened tresses overspread  
Her bosom, which thou seest not (for each hair

On that side grows) was Manto, she who  
searched

Through many regions, and at length her seat  
Fixed in my native land: whence a short space  
My words detain thy audience. When her sire  
From life departed, and in servitude  
The city dedicate to Bacchus mourned,  
Long time she went a wanderer through the  
world.

Aloft in Italy's delightful land  
A lake there lies, at foot of that proud Alp  
That o'er the Tyrol locks Germania in,  
Its name Benacus, from whose ample breast  
A thousand springs, methinks, and more be-  
tween

Camonica and Garda, issuing forth,  
Water the Apennine. There is a spot  
At midway of that lake, where he who bears  
Of Trento's flock the pastoral staff, with him  
Of Brescia, and the Veronese, might each  
Passing that way his benediction give.  
A garrison of goodly site and strong  
Peschiera stands, to awe with front opposed  
The Bergamese and Brescian, whence the shore  
More slope each way descends. There, what-  
soe'er

Benacus' bosom holds out, tumbling o'er  
Down falls, and winds a river flood beneath  
Through the green pastures. Soon as in his  
course

The stream makes head, Benacus then no more  
They call the name, but Minicus, till at last  
Reaching Governo, into Po he falls.

Not far his course hath run, when a wide flat  
It finds, which overstretching as a marsh

It covers, pestilent in summer oft.  
Hence journeying, the savage maiden saw  
Midst of the fen a territory waste  
And naked of inhabitants. To shun  
All human converse, here she with her slaves,  
Plying her arts, remained, and lived, and left  
Her body tenantless. Thenceforth the tribes,  
Who round were scattered, gathering to that  
place,

Assembled; for its strength was great, enclosed  
On all parts by the fen. On those dead bones  
They reared themselves a city, for her sake  
Calling it Mantua, who first chose the spot,  
Nor asked another omen for the name;  
Wherein more numerous the people dwelt,  
Ere Casalodi's madness by deceit  
Was wronged of Pinamonte. If thou hear  
Henceforth another origin assigned  
Of that my country, I forewarn thee now,  
That falsehood none beguile thee of the truth."  
I answered, "Teacher, I conclude thy words  
So certain, that all else shall be to me  
As embers lacking life. But now of these,  
Who here proceed, instruct me, if thou see  
Any that merit more especial note.  
For thereon is my mind alone intent."

He straight replied: "That spirit, from whose  
cheek

The beard sweeps o'er his shoulders brown,  
what time

Græcia was emptied of her males, that scarce  
The cradles were supplied, the seer was he  
In Aulis, who with Calchas gave the sign  
When first to cut the cable. Him they named  
Eurypilus: so sings my tragic strain.

In which majestic measure well thou know'st,  
Who know'st it all. That other, round the  
loins

So slender of his shape, was Michael Scot,  
Practised in every slight of magic wile.

"Guido Bonatti see: Asdente mark,  
Who now were willing he had tended still  
The thread and cordwain, and too late repents.

"See next the wretches, who the needle left,  
The shuttle and the spindle, and became  
Diviners: baneful witcheries they wrought  
With images and herbs. But onward now:  
For now doth Cain with fork of thorns confine  
On either hemisphere, touching the wave  
Beneath the towers of Seville. Yesternight  
The moon was round. Thou mayst remember  
well:

For she good service did thee in the gloom  
Of the deep wood." This said, both onward  
moved.

## CANTO XXI.

Thus we from bridge to bridge, with other talk,  
The which my drama cares not be rehearse,  
Passed on; and to the summit reaching, stood  
To view another gap, within the round  
Of Malebolge, other bootless pangs,

Marvellous darkness shadowed o'er the place.

In the Venetians' arsenal as boils  
Through wintry months tenacious pitch, to  
smear

Their unsound vessels; for the inclement time

Sea-faring men restrains, and in that while  
His bark one builds anew, another stops  
The ribs of his that hath made many a voyage,  
One hammers at the prow, one at the poop,  
This shapeth oars, that other cables twirls,  
The mizen one repairs, and main-sail rent;  
So, not by force of fire but art divine,  
Boiled here a glutinous thick mass, that round  
Lined all the shore beneath. I that beheld,  
But therein nought distinguished, save the  
bubbles

Raised by the boiling, and one mighty swell  
Heave, and by turns subsiding fall. While  
there

I fixed my ken below, "Mark! mark!" my  
guide

Exclaiming, drew me towards him from the  
place

Wherein I stood. I turned myself, as one  
Impatient to behold that which beheld  
He needs must shun, whom sudden fear un-  
mans,

That he his flight delays not for the view,  
Behind me I discerned a devil black.

That running up advanced along the rock.

Ah! what fierce cruelty his look bespake.

In act how bitter did he seem, with wings  
Buoyant outstretched and feet of nimblest  
tread.

His shoulder, proudly eminent and sharp,  
Was with a sinner charged; by either haunch  
He held him, the foot's sinew griping fast.

"Ye of our bridge!" he cried, "keen-taloned  
fiends!

Lo! one of Santa Zita's elders. Him

Whelm ye beneath, while I return for more.  
That land hath store of such. All men are  
there,

Except Bonturo, barterers: of 'no'  
For lucre there an 'ay' is quickly made."

Him dashing down, o'er the rough rock he  
turned;

Nor ever after thief a mastiff loosed  
Sped with like eager haste. That other sank,  
And forthwith writhing to the surface rose.  
But those dark demons, shrouded by the bridge,  
Cried, "Here the hallowed visage saves not:  
here

Is other swimming than in Serchio's wave,  
Wherefore, if thou desire we rend thee not,  
Take heed thou mount not o'er the pitch."

This said,

They grappled him with more than hundred  
hooks,

And shouted: "Covered thou must sport thee  
here;

So, if thou canst, in secret thou mayst filch."  
E'en thus the cook bestirs him, with his grooms,  
To thrust the flesh into the caldron down  
With flesh-hooks, that it float not on the top.

Me then my guide bespake: "Lest they  
descrie

That thou art here, behind a craggy rock  
Bend low and screen thee: and whate'er of  
force

Be offered me, or insult, fear thou not;  
For I am well advised, who have been erst  
In the like fray." Beyond the bridge's head  
Therewith he passed; and reaching the sixth  
pier,



Behoved him then a forehead terror-proof.

With storm and fury, as when dogs rush  
forth

Upon the poor man's back, who suddenly  
From whence he standeth makes his suit; so  
rushed

Those from beneath the arch, and against him  
Their weapons all they pointed. He, aloud:  
"Be none of you outrageous: ere your time  
Dare seize me, come forth from amongst you  
one,

Who having heard my words, decide he then  
If he shall tear these limbs." They shouted  
loud,

"Go, Malacoda!" Whereat one advanced,  
The others standing firm, and as he came,  
"What may this turn avail him?" he ex-  
claimed.

"Believest thou, Malacoda! I had come  
Thus far from all your skirmishing secure,"  
My teacher answered, "without will divine  
And destiny propitious? Pass we then;  
For so Heaven's pleasure is, that I should lead  
Forthwith so fell his pride, that he let drop  
The instrument of torture at his feet,  
And to the rest exclaimed: "We have no power  
To strike him." Then to me my guide: "O  
thou!

Who on the bridge among the crags dost sit  
Low crouching, safely now to me return."

I rose, and towards him moved with speed;  
the fiends

Meantime all forward drew: me terror seized,

Lest they should break the compact they had made.

Thus issuing from Caprona, once I saw  
The infantry, dreading lest his covenant  
The foe should break; so close he hemmed  
them round.

I to my leader's side adhered, mine eyes  
With fixt and motionless observance bent  
On their unkindly visage. They their hooks  
Protruding, one the other thus bespake:

"Wilt thou I touch him on the hip?" To whom  
Was answered: "Even so, nor miss thy aim."

But he, who was in conference with my  
guide,  
Turned rapid round; and thus the demon  
spake:

"Stay, stay thee, Scarmiglione!" Then to us  
He added: "Further footing to your step  
This rock affords not, shivered to the base  
Of the sixth arch. But would ye still proceed,  
Up by this cavern go: not distant far,  
Another rock will yield you passage safe.  
Yesterday, later by five hours than now,  
Twelve hundred threescore years and six had  
filled

The circuit of their course, since here the way  
Was broken. Thitherward I straight dispatch  
Certain of these my scouts, who shall espy  
If any on the surface bask. With them  
Go ye: for ye shall find them nothing fell.  
Come, Alichino, forth," with that he cried,  
"And Calcabrina, and Cagnazzo thou!  
The troop of ten let Barbariccia lead.  
With Libicocco, Draghinazzo haste,  
Fanged Ciriatto, Graffiacane fierce,

And Farfarello, and mad Rubicant,  
Search ye around the bubbling tar. For these,  
In safety lead them, where the other crag  
Uninterrupted traverses the dens."

I then: "O master! what a sight is there.  
Ah! without escort, journey we alone,  
Which, if thou know the way, I covet not.  
Unless thy prudence fail thee, dost not mark,  
How they do gnarl upon us, and their scowl  
Threatens us present tortures?" He replied:  
"I charge thee, fear not: let them, as they will,  
Gnarl on: 'tis but a token of their spite  
Against the souls who mourn in torment  
steeped."

To leftward o'er the pier they turned; but each  
Had first between his teeth prest close the  
tongue,  
Toward their leader for a signal looking,  
Which he with sound obscene triumphant gave.

## CANTO XXII.

### ARGUMENT.

Virgil and Dante proceed, accompanied by the Demons, and see other sinners of the same description in the same gulf. The device of Ciampolc, one of these, to escape from the Demons, who had laid hold on him.

It hath been heretofore my chance to see  
Horsemen with martial order shifting camp,  
To onset sallying, or in muster ranged,  
Or in retreat sometimes outstretched for flight:  
Light-armed squadrons and fleet foragers

Scouring thy plains, Arezzo! have I seen,  
And clashing tournaments, and tilting jousts,  
Now with the sound of trumpets, now of bells,  
Tabors, or signals made from castled heights,  
And with inventions multiform, our own,  
Or introduced from foreign land; but ne'er  
To such a strange recorder I beheld,  
In evolution moving, horse nor foot,  
Nor ship, that tacked by sign from land or star,  
With the ten demons on our way we went;  
Ah, fearful company! but in the church  
With saints, with gluttons at the tavern's  
mess.

Still earnest on the pitch I gazed, to mark  
All things whate'er the chasm contained, and  
those  
Who burned within. As dolphins that, in sign  
To mariners, heave high their arched backs,  
That thence forewarned they may advise to  
save  
Their threatened vessel: so, at intervals,  
To ease the pain, his back some sinner showed,  
Then hid more nimbly than the lightning-  
glance.

E'en as the frogs, that of a watery moat  
Stand at the brink, with the jaws only out,  
Their feet and of the trunk all else concealed,  
Thus on each part the sinners stood; but soon  
As Barbariccia was at hand, so they  
Drew back under the wave. I saw, and yet  
My heart doth stagger, one, that waited thus,  
As it befalls that oft one frog remains,  
While the next springs away: and Graffiacan,  
Who of the fiends was nearest, grappling seized

His clotted locks, and dragged him sprawling  
up,

That he appeared to me an otter. Each  
Already by their names I knew, so well  
When they were chosen I observed, and marked  
How one the other called. "O Rubicant!  
See that his hide thou with they talons flay,"  
Shouted together all the cursed crew.

Then I: "Inform thee, Master! if thou may,  
What wretched soul is this, on whom their  
hands

His foes have laid." My leader to his side  
Approached, and whence he came inquired; to  
whom

Was answered thus: "Born in Navarre's do-  
main,

My mother placed me in a lord's retinue;  
For she had borne me to a losel vile,  
A spendthrift of his substance and himself.  
The good king Thibault after that I served:  
To peculating here my thoughts were turned,  
Whereof I give account in this dire heat."

Straight Ciriatto, from whose mouth a tusk  
Issued on either side, as from a boar,  
Ripped him with one of these. 'Twixt evil  
claws

The mouse had fallen: but Barbariccia cried,  
Seizing him with both arms: "Stand thou  
apart

While I do fix him on my prong transpierced."  
Then added, turning to my guide his face,  
"Inquire of him, if more thou wish to learn,  
Ere he again be rent." My leader thus:  
"Then tell us of the partners in thy guilt;  
Knowest thou any sprung of Latan land

Under the tar?"—"I parted," he replied,  
"But now from one, who sojourned not far  
thence;

So were I under shelter now with him,  
Nor hook nor talon than should scare me more."

"Too long we suffer," Libicocco cried;  
Then, darting forth a prong, seized on his arm,  
And mangled bore away the sinewy part.  
Him Draghinazzo by his thighs beneath  
Would next have caught; whence angrily their  
chief,

Turning on all sides round, with threatening  
brow

Restrained them. When their strife a little  
ceased,

Of him, who yet was gazing on his wound,

My teacher thus without delay inquired:

"Who was the spirit, from whom by evil hap  
Parting, as thou hast told, thou camest to  
shore?"—

"It was the friar Gomita," he rejoined,

"He of Gallura, vessel of all guile,

Who had his master's enemies in hand,

And used them so that they commend him  
well.

Money he took, and them at large dismissed;

So he reports; and in each other charge

Committed to his keeping played the part

Of barterer to the height. With him doth  
herd

The chief of Logodoro, Michel Zanche.

Sardinia is a theme whereof their tongue

Is never weary. Out! alas! behold

That other, how he grins. More would I say,

But tremble lest he mean to maul me sore."

Their captain then to Farfarello turning,  
Who rolled his moony eyes in act to strike,  
Rebuked him thus: "Off, cursed bird! avaunt!"

"If ye desire to see or hear," he thus  
Quaking with dread resumed, "or Tuscan  
spirits

Or Lombard, I will cause them to appear.  
Meantime let these ill talons bate their fury,  
So that no vengeance they may fear from them,  
And I, remaining in this self-same place,  
Will, for myself but one, make seven appear,  
When my shrill whistle shall be heard: for so  
Our custom is to call each other up."

Cagnazzo at that word deriding grinned,  
Then wagged the head and spake: "Hear his  
device,

Mischievous as he is, to plunge him down."

Whereto he thus, who failed not in rich store  
Of nice-wove toils: "Mischief, forsooth, ex-  
treme!

Meant only to procure myself more woe."

No longer Alichino then refrained,  
But thus, the rest gainsaying, him bespake:  
"If thou do cast thee down, I not on foot  
Will chase thee, but above the pitch will beat  
My plumes. Quit we the vantage ground, and  
let

The bank be as a shield; that we may see,  
If singly thou prevail against us all."

Now, reader, of new sport expect to hear.

They each one turned his eyes to the other  
shore.

He first, who was the hardest to persuade.

The spirit of Navarre chose well his time,  
Planted his feet on land, and at one leap

Escaping, disappointed their resolve.

Them quick resentment stung, but him the  
most

Who was the cause of failure: in pursuit

He therefore sped, exclaiming, "Thou art  
caught."

But little it availed; terror outstripped  
His following flight; the other plunged be-  
neath,

And he with upward pinion raised his breast:  
E'en thus the water-fowl, when she perceives  
The falcon near, dives, instant down, while he  
Enraged and spent retires. That mockery  
In Calcebrina fury stirred, who flew

After him, with desire of strife inflamed;  
And, for the barterer had 'scaped, so turned  
His talons on his comrade. O'er the dike

In grapple close they joined; but the other  
proved

A goshawk able to read well his foe;  
And in the boiling lake both fell. The heat  
Was umpire soon between them; but in vain  
To lift themselves they strove, so fast were  
glued

Their pennons. Barbariccia, as the rest,  
That chance lamenting, four in flight des-  
patched

From the other coast, with all their weapons  
armed.

They, to their post on each side speedily  
Descending, stretched their hooks toward the  
fiends,

Who floundered, inly burning from their scars:  
And we departing left them to that broil.



## CANTO XXIII.

## ARGUMENT.

The enraged Demons pursue Dante, but he is preserved from them by Virgil. On reaching the sixth gulf, he beholds the punishment of the hypocrites; which is, to pace continually round the gulf under the pressure of caps and hoods, that are gilt on the outside, but leaden within. He is addressed by two of these, Catalano and Loderingo, knights of Saint Mary, otherwise called Joyous Friars and Bologna. Caiaphas is seen fixed to a cross on the ground, and lies so stretched along the way, that all tread on him in passing.

In silence and in solitude we went,  
One first, the other following his steps,  
As minor friars journeying on their road.

The present fray had turned my thoughts to  
    muse

Upon old Aesop's fable, where he told  
What fate unto the mouse and frog befell;  
For language hath not sounds more like in  
    sense,

Than are these chances, if the origin  
And end of each be heedfully compared.  
And as one thought bursts from another froth,  
So afterward from that another sprang,  
Which added doubly to my former fear.  
For thus I reasoned: "These through us have  
    been

So foiled, with loss and mockery so complete,

As needs must sting them sore. If anger then  
Be to their evil will conjoined, more fell  
They shall pursue us, than the savage hound  
Snatches the leveret panting 'twixt his jaws."

Already I perceived my hair stand all  
On end with terror, and looked eager back.

"Teacher," I thus began, "if speedily  
Thyself and me thou hide not, much I dread  
Those evil talons. Even now behind  
They urge us: quick imagination works  
So forcibly, that I already feel them."

He answered: "Were I formed of leaded  
glass,  
I should not sooner draw unto myself  
Thy outward image, than I now imprint  
That from within. This moment came thy  
thoughts

Presented before mine, with similar act  
And countenance similar, so that from both  
I one design have framed. If the right coast  
Incline so much, that we may thence descend  
Into the other chasm, we shall escape  
Secure from this imagined pursuit."

He had not spoke his purpose to the end,  
When I from far beheld them with spread  
wings

Approach to take us. Suddenly my guide  
Caught me, even as a mother that from sleep  
Is by the noise aroused, and near her sees  
The climbing fires, who snatches up her babe  
And flies ne'er pausing, careful more of him  
Than of herself, that but a single vest  
Clings round her limbs. Down from the jut-  
ting beach

Supine he cast him to that pendent rock,

Which closes on one part the other chasm.

Never ran water with such hurrying pace  
Adown the tube to turn a land-mills' wheel,  
When nearest it approaches to the spokes,  
As then along that edge my master ran,  
Carrying me in his bosom, as a child,  
Not a companion. Scarcely had his feet  
Reached the lowest of the bed beneath,  
When over us the steep they reached: but fear  
In him was none; for that high Providence,  
Which placed them ministers of the fifth foss,  
Power of departing thence took from them all.

There in the depth we saw a painted tribe,  
Who paced with tardy steps around, and wept,  
Faint in appearance and o'ercome with toil.  
Caps had they on, with hoods, that fell low  
down

Before their eyes, in fashion like to those  
Worn by the monks in Cologne. Their outside  
Was overlaid with gold, dazzling to view,  
But leaden all within, and of such weight,  
That Frederick's compared to these were straw.  
Oh, everlasting wearisome attire!

We yet once more with them together turned  
To leftward, on their dismal moan intent.  
But by the weight opprest, so slowly came  
The fainting people, that our company  
Was changed, at every movement of the step.

Whence I my guide addressed: "See that  
thou find  
Some spirit, whose name may by his deeds be  
known;

And to that end look round thee as thou go'st."

Then one, who understood the Tuscan voice,  
Cried after us aloud: "Hold in your feet,

• Ye who so swiftly speed through the dusk air.  
Perchance from me thou shalt obtain thy wish."

Whereat my leader, turning, me bespake:  
"Pause, and then onward at their pace proceed."

I stayed, and saw two spirits in whose look  
Impatient eagerness of mind was marked  
To overtake me; but the load they bare  
And narrow path retarded their approach.

Soon as arrived, they with an eye askance  
Purused me, but spake not: then turning, each  
To other thus conferring said: "This one  
Seems, by the action of his throat, alive;  
And, be they dead, what privilege allows  
They walk unmantled by the cumbrous stole?"

Then thus to me: "Tuscan, who visitest  
The college of the mourning hypocrites,  
Disdain not to instruct us who thou art."

"By Arno's pleasant stream," I thus replied,  
"In the great city I was bred and grew,  
And wear the body I have even worn.  
But who are ye, from whom such mighty grief,  
As now I witness, courseth down your cheeks?  
What torment breaks forth in this bitter woe?"

"Our bonnets gleaming bright with orange  
hue,"

One of them answered, "are so leaden gross.  
That with their weight they make the balances  
To crack beneath them. Joyous friars we were,  
Bologna's natives; Catalano I,  
He Loderingo named; and by thy land  
Together taken, as men use to take  
A single and indifferent arbiter,  
To reconcile their strifes. How there we sped,  
Gardingo's vicinage can best declare."

"O friars!" I began, "your miseries—" But there brake off, for one had caught mine eye,  
Fixed to a cross with three stakes on the ground:  
He, when he saw me, writhed himself, throughout  
Distorted, ruffling with deep sighs his beard.  
And Catalano, who thereof was 'ware,  
Thus spake: "That pierced spirit, whom intent  
Thou view'st, was he who gave the Pharisees  
Counsel, that it were fitting for one man  
To suffer for the people. He doth lie  
Transverse; nor any passes, but him first  
Behoves make feeling trial how each weighs.  
In straits like this along the foss are placed  
The father of his consort, and the rest  
Partakers in that council, seed of ill  
And sorrow to the Jews." I noted then,  
How Virgil gazed with wonder upon him,  
Thus abjectly extended on the cross  
In banishment eternal. To the friar  
He next his words addressed: "We pray ye  
tell,  
If so be lawful, whether on our right  
Lies any opening in the rock, whereby  
We both may issue hence, without constraint  
On the dark angels, that compelled they come  
To lead us from this depth." He thus replied:  
"Nearer than thou dost hope, there is a rock  
From the great circle moving, which o'ersteps  
Each vale of horror, save that here his cope  
Is shattered. By the ruin ye may mount:  
For on the side it slants, and most the height  
Rises below." With head bent down awhile

My leader stood; then spake: "He warned us  
ill,

Who yonder hangs the sinners on his hook."

To whom the friar: "At Bologna erst

I many vices of the devil heard;

Among the rest was said, 'He is a liar,

And the father of lies!'" When he had spoke,

My leader with large strides proceeded on,

Somewhat disturbed with anger in his look.

I therefore left the spirits heavy laden,

And, following, his beloved footsteps marked.

## CANTO XXIV.

### ARGUMENT.

Under the escort of his faithful master, Dante not without difficulty makes his way out of the sixth gulf; and in the seventh, sees the robbers tormented by venomous and pestilent serpents. The soul of Vanni Fucci, who had pillaged the sacristy of Saint James in Pistoia, predicts some calamities that impended over that city, and over the Florentines.

In the year's early nonage, when the sun  
Tempers his tresses in Aquarius' urn,  
And now towards equal day the nights recede;  
When as the rime upon the earth puts on  
Her dazzling sister's image, but not long  
Her milder sway endures; then riseth up  
The village hind, whom fails his wintry store,  
And looking out beholds the plain around  
All whitened; whence impatiently he smites  
His thighs, and to his hut returning in,

There paces to and fro, wailing his lot,  
As a discomfited and helpless man;  
Then comes he forth again, and feels new  
hope

Spring in his bosom, finding e'en thus soon  
The world hath changed its countenance, grasps  
his crook,

And forth to pasture drives his little flock:  
So me my guide disheartened, when I saw  
His troubled forehead; and so speedily  
That ill was cured; for at the fallen bridge  
Arriving, towards me with a look as sweet,  
He turned him back, as that I first beheld  
At the steep mountain's foot. Regarding well  
The ruin, and some counsel first maintained  
With his own thought, he opened wide his arm  
And took me up. As one, who, while he works,  
Computes his labor's issue, that he seems  
Still to foeseer the effect; so lifting me  
Up to the summit of one peak, he fixed  
His eye upon another. "Grapple that,"  
Said he, "but first make proof, if it be such  
As will sustain thee." For one capt with lead  
This were no journey. Scarcely he, though  
light,

And I, though onward pushed from crag to  
crag,

Could mount. And if the precinct of this coast  
Were not less ample than the last, for him  
I know not, but my strength had surely failed.  
But Malebolge all toward the mouth  
Inclining of the nethermost abyss,  
The site of every valley hence requires,  
That one side upward slope, the other fall.

At length the point from whence the utmost  
stone

Juts down, we reached; soon as to that arrived,  
So was the breath exhausted from my lungs  
I could no further, but did seat me there.

"Now needs thy best of man;" so spake my  
guide:

"For not on downy plumes, nor under shade  
Of canopy reposing, fame is won;

Without which whosoe'er consumes his days,  
Leaveth such vestige of himself on earth,  
As smoke in air or foam upon the wave.

Thou therefore rise: vanquish thy weariness  
By the mind's effort, in each struggle formed  
To vanquish, if she suffer not the weight  
Of her corporeal frame to crush her down.

A longer ladder yet remains to scale.

From these to have escaped sufficeth not.

If well thou note me, profit by my words."

I straightway rose, and showed myself less  
spent

Than I in truth did feel me. "On," I cried,  
"For I am stout and fearless." Up the rock  
Our way we held, more rugged than before,  
Narrower, and steeper far to climb. From talk  
I ceased not, as we journeyed, so to seem  
Least faint; whereat a voice from the other  
foss

Did issue forth, for utterance suited ill.

Though on the arch that crosses there I stood,  
What were the words I knew not, but who  
spake

Seemed moved in anger. Down I stooped to  
look;

But my quick eye might reach not to the depth



For shrouding darkness; wherefore thus I  
spake:

"To the next circle, teacher, bend thy steps,  
And from the wall dismount we; for as hence  
I hear and understand not, so I see  
Beneath, and naught discern."—"I answer not,"  
Said he, "but by the deed. To fair request  
Silent performance maketh best return."

We from the bridge's head descended, where  
To the eighth mound it joins; and then, the  
chasm

Opening to view, I saw a crowd within  
Of serpents terrible, so strange of shape  
And hideous, that remembrance in my veins  
Yet shrinks the vital current. Of her sands  
Let Libya vaunt no more: if Jaculus,  
Pareas and Chelyder be her brood,  
Cenchris and Amphisbœna, plagues so dire  
Or in such numbers swarming ne'er she  
showed,

Not with all Ethiopia, and whate'er  
Above the Erythræan sea is spawned.

Amid this dread exuberance of woe  
Ran naked spirits winked with horrid fear,  
Nor hope had they of crevice where to hide,  
Or heliotrope to charm them out of view.  
With serpents were their hands behind them  
bound,

Which through their reins infixed the tail and  
head

Twisted in folds before. And lo! on one  
Near to our side, darted an adder up,  
And, where the neck is on the shoulders tied,

Transpierced him. Far more quickly than  
e'er pen

Wrote O or I, he kindled, burned, and changed  
To ashes all, poured out upon the earth.

When there dissolved he lay, the dust again  
Uprolled spontaneous, and the self-same form  
Instant resumed. So mighty sages tell,  
The Arabian Phoenix, when five hundred years  
Have well nigh circled, dies, and springs forth-  
with

Renascent: blade nor herb throughout his life  
He tastes, but tears of frankincense alone  
And odorous amomum: swaths of nard  
And myrrh his funeral shroud. As one that  
falls,

He knows not how, by force demoniac dragged  
To earth, or through obstruction fettering up  
In chains invisible the powers of man,  
Who, risen from his trance, gazeth around,  
Bewildered with the monstrous agony  
He hath endured, and wildly staring sighs;  
So stood aghast the sinner when he rose.

Oh! how severe God's judgment, that deals  
out

Such blows in stormy vengeance. Who he was,  
My teacher next inquired; and thus in few  
He answered: "Vanni Fucci am I called,  
Not long since rained down from Tuscany  
To this dire gullet. Me the bestial life  
And not the human pleased, mule that I was,  
Who in Pistoia found my worthy den."

I then to Virgil: "Bid him stir not hence;  
And ask what crime did thrust him hither:  
once

A man I knew him, choleric and bloody."

The sinner heard and feigned not, but towards me

His mind directing and his face, wherein  
Was dismal shame depicted, thus he spake:  
"It grieves me more to have been caught by  
thee

In this sad plight, which thou beholdest, than  
When I was taken from the other life.

I have no power permitted to deny  
What thou inquirest. I am doomed thus low  
To dwell, for that the sacristy by me  
Was rifled of its goodly ornaments,  
And with the guilt another falsely charged.  
But that thou mayst not joy to see me thus,  
So as thou e'er shalt 'scape this darksome  
realm

Open thine ears and hear what I forebode.  
Reft of the Neri first Pistoia pines;  
Then Florence changeth citizens and laws;  
From Valdimagra, drawn by wrathful Mars,  
A vapor rises, wrapt in turbid mists,  
And sharp and eager driveth on the storm  
With arrowy hurtling o'er Piceno's field,  
Whence suddenly the cloud shall burst, and  
strike  
Each helpless Bianco prostrate to the ground.  
This have I told, that grief may rend thy  
heart."

## CANTO XXV.

### ARGUMENT.

The sacrilegious Fucci vents his fury in blasphemy, is seized by serpents, and flying is pursued by Cacus in the form of a Centaur, who is

described with a swarm of serpents on his haunch, and a dragon on his shoulders breathing forth fire. Our Poet then meets with the spirits of three of his countrymen, two of whom undergo marvellous transformation in his presence.

When he had spoke, the sinner raised his hands

Pointed in mockery, and cried: "Take them, God!

I level them at thee." From that day forth  
The serpents were my friends; for round his neck

One of them rolling twisted, as it said,  
"Be silent, tongue!" Another, to his arms  
Upliding tied them riveting itself  
So close it took from them the power to move.

Pistoia! ah, Pistoia! why dost doubt  
To turn thee into ashes, cumbering earth  
No longer, since in evil act so far  
Thou hast outdone thy seed? I did not mark,  
Through all the gloomy circles of the abyss,  
Spirit, that swelled so proudly 'gainst his  
God;

Not him, who headlong fell from Thebes. He fled,

Nor uttered more; and after him there came  
A centaur full of fury, shouting, "Where,  
Where is the caitiff?" On Maremma's marsh  
Swarm not the serpent tribe, as on his haunch  
They swarmed, to where the human face begins.

Behind his head, upon the shoulders, lay  
With open wings a dragon, breathing fire  
On whomsoe'er he met. To me my guide:

"Cacus is this, who underneath the rock  
Of Aventine spread oft a lake of blood.  
He, from his brethren parted, here must tread  
A different journey, for his fraudulent theft  
Of the great herd that rear him stalled;  
whence found

His felon deeds their end, beneath the mace  
Of stout Alcides, that perchance laid on  
A hundred blows, and not the tenth was felt."

While yet he spake, the centaur sped away:  
And under us three spirits came, of whom  
Nor I nor he was ware, till they exclaimed,  
"Say who are ye!" We then brake off dis-  
course,

Intent on these alone. I knew them not:  
But, as it chanceth oft, befell, that one  
Had need to name another. "Where," said he,  
"Doth Cianfa lurk?" I, for a sign my guide  
Should stand attentive, placed against my lips  
The finger lifted. If, O reader! now  
Thou be not apt to credit what I tell,  
No marvel; for myself do scarce allow  
The witness of mine eyes. But as I looked  
Toward them, lo! a serpent with six feet  
Springs forth on one, and fastens full upon  
him:

His midmost grasped the belly, a forefoot  
Seized on each arm (while deep in either  
check

He fleshed his fangs); the hinder on the thighs  
Were spread, 'twixt which the tail inserted  
curled

Upon the reins behind. Ivy ne'er clasped  
A doddered oak, as round the other's limbs

The hideous monster intertwined his own.  
Then, as they both had been of burning wax,  
Each melted into other, mingling hues,  
That which was either now was seen no more.  
Thus up the shrinking paper, ere it burns,  
A brown tint glides, not turning yet to black,  
And the clean white expires. The other two  
Looked on, exclaiming, "Ah! how dost thou  
change,

Agnello! See? Thou art nor double now,  
Nor only one." The two heads now became  
One, and two figures blended in one form  
Appeared, where both were lost. Of the four  
lengths

Two arms were made: the belly and the chest,  
The thighs and legs, into such members  
changed

As never eye hath seen. Of former shape  
All trace was vanished. Two, yet neither  
seemed

That image miscreate, and so passed on  
With tardy steps. As underneath the scourge  
Of the fierce dog-star that lays bare the fields,  
Shifting from brake to brake the lizard seems  
A flash of lightning, if he thwart the road;  
So toward the entrails of the other two  
Approaching seemed an adder all on fire,  
As the dark pepper-grain livid and swart.  
In that part, whence our life is nourished first,  
One he transpierced; then down before him  
fell

Stretched out. The pierced spirit looked on  
him,

But spake not; yea, stood motionless and  
yawned,

As if by sleep or feverous fit assailed.  
He eyed the serpent, and the serpent him.  
One from the wound, the other from the mouth  
Breathed a thick smoke, whose vapory columns  
joined.

Lucan in mute attention now may hear,  
Nor thy disastrous fate, Sabellus, tell,  
Nor thine, Nasidius. Ovid now be mute.  
What if in warbling fiction he record  
Cadmus and Arethusa, to a snake  
Him changed, and her into a fountain clear,  
I envy not; for never face to face  
Two natures thus transmuted did he sing,  
Wherein both shapes were ready to assume  
The other's substance. They in mutual guise  
So answered, that the serpent split his train  
Divided to a fork, and the pierced spirit  
Drew close his steps together, legs and thighs  
Compacted, that no sign of juncture soon  
Was visible: the tail, disparted, took  
The figure which the spirit lost; its skin  
Softening, his indurated to a rind.  
The shoulders next I marked, that entering  
joined  
The monster's arm-pits, whose two shorter  
feet  
So lengthened, as the others dwindling shrunk.  
The feet behind then twisting up became  
That part that man conceals, which in the  
wretch  
Was cleft in twain. While both the shadowy  
smoke  
With a new color veils, and generates  
The excrescent pile on one, peeling it off  
From the other body, lo! upon his feet

One upright rose, and prone the other fell.  
Nor yet their glaring and malignant lamps  
Were shifted, though each feature changed  
beneath.

Of him who stood erect, the mounting face  
Retreated towards the temples, and what there  
Superfluous matter came, shot out in ears  
From the smooth cheeks; the rest, not back-  
ward dragged,

Of its excess did shape the nose; and swelled  
Into due size protuberant the lips.

He, on the earth who lay, meanwhile extends  
His sharpened visage, and draws down the ears  
Into the head, as doth the slug his horns.

His tongue, continuous before and apt  
For utterance, severs; and the other's fork  
Closing unites. That done, the smoke was  
laid.

The soul, transformed into the brute, glides off,  
Hissing along the vale, and after him  
The other talking sputters; but soon turned  
His new-grown shoulders on him and in few  
Thus to another spake: "Along this path  
Crawling, as I have done, speed Buoso now!"

So saw I fluctuate in successive change  
The unsteady ballast of the seventh hold:  
And here if aught my pen have swerved, events  
So strange may be its warrant. O'er mine  
eyes

Confusion hung, and on my thoughts amaze.

Yet scaped they not so covertly, but well  
I marked Sciancato: he alone it was  
Of the three first that came, who changed not:  
tho'

The other's fate, Gaville! still dost rue.



## CANTO XXVI.

## ARGUMENT.

Remounting by the steps, down which they had descended to the seventh gulf, they go forward to the arch that stretches over the eighth, and from thence behold numberless ames wherein are punished the evil counsellors, each ame containing a sinner, save one, in which were Diomede and Ulysses, the latter of whom relates the manner of his death.

FLORENCE, exult! for thou so mightily  
Hast thriven, that o'er land and sea thy wings  
Thou beatest, and thy name spreads over hell.  
Among the plunderers, such the three I found  
Thy citizens; whence shame to me thy son,  
And no proud honor to thyself redounds.

But if our minds, when dreaming near the  
dawn,  
Are of the truth presageful, thou ere long  
Shalt feel what Prato (not to say the rest)  
Would fain might come upon thee; and that  
chance

Were in good time, if it befell thee now.  
Would so it were, since it must needs befall!  
For as time wears me, I shall grieve the more.

We from the depth departed; and my guide  
Remounting scaled the flinty steps, which late  
Among the crags and splinters of the rock,  
Sped not our feet without the help of hands.

Then sorrow seized me, which e'en now re-  
vives.

As my thought turns again to what I saw,  
And, more than I am wont, I rein and curb  
The powers of nature in me, lest they run  
Where Virtue guides not; that, if aught of good  
My gentle star or something better gave me,  
I envy not myself the precious boon.

As in that season, when the sun least veils  
His face that lightens all, what time the fly  
Gives way to the shrill gnat, the peasant then  
Upon some cliff reclined, beneath him sees  
Fire-flies innumerable spangling o'er the vale,  
Vineyard or tilth, where his day-labor lies;  
With flames so numberless throughout its  
space

Shone the eighth chasm, apparent, when the  
depth

Was to my view exposed. As he, whose wrongs  
The bears avenged, at its departure saw  
Elijah's chariot, when the steeds erect  
Raised their steep flight for heaven; his eyes,  
meanwhile,

Straining pursued them, till the flame alone,  
Upsoaring like a misty spect, he kenned:  
E'en thus along the gulf moves every flame,  
A sinner so enfolded close in each,  
That none exhibits token of the theft.

Upon the bridge I forward bent to look,  
And grasped a flinty mass, or else had fallen,  
Though pushed not from the height. The  
guide, who marked

How I did gaze attentive, thus began:

"Within these ardors are the spirits, each  
Swathed in confining fires."—"Master! thy  
word,"

I answered, "hath assured me; yet I deemed  
Already of the truth, already wished  
To ask thee who is in yon fire, that comes  
So parted at the summit, as it seemed  
Ascending from that funeral pile where lay  
The Theban brothers." He replied: "Within,  
Ulysses there and Diomedes endure  
Their penal tortures, thus to vengeance now  
Together hasting, as erewhile to wrath.

These in the flames with ceaseless groans de-  
plore

The ambush of the horse, that opened wide  
A portal for that goodly seed to pass,  
Which sowed imperial Rome; nor less the  
guile

Lament they, whence, of her Achilles 'reft,  
Deidamia yet in death complains.  
And there is rued the stratagem that Troy  
Of her Palladium spoiled."—"If they have  
power

Of utterance from within these sparks," said I,  
"O master! think my prayer a thousand-fold  
In repetition urged, that thou vouchsafe  
To pause till here the horned flame arrive.  
See, how toward it with desire I bend."

He thus: "Thy prayer is worthy of much  
praise,

And I accept it, therefore; but do thou  
Thy tongue refrain: to question them be mine;  
For I divine thy wish; and they perchance,  
For they were Greeks, might shun discourse  
with thee."

When there the flame had come, where time  
and place

Seemed fitting to my guide, he thus began:  
"O ye, who dwell two spirits in one fire!  
If, living, I of you did merit aught,  
Whate'er the measure were of that desert,  
When in the world my lofty strain I poured,  
Move ye not on, till one of you unfold  
In what clime death o'ertook him self-de-  
stroyed."

Of the old flame forthwith the greater horn  
Began to roll, murmuring, as a fire  
That labors with the wind, then to and fro  
Wagging the top, as a tongue uttering sounds,  
Threw out its voice, and spake: "When I es-  
caped

From Circe, who beyond a circling year  
Had me held near Caieta by her charms,  
Ere thus Æneas yet had named the shore;  
Nor fondness for my son, nor reverence  
Of my old father, nor return of love,  
That should have crowned Penelope with joy,  
Could overcome in me the zeal I had  
To explore the world, and search the ways of  
life,

Man's evil and his virtue. Forth I sailed  
Into the deep illimitable main,  
With but one bark, and the small faithful band  
That yet cleaved to me. As Iberia far,  
Far as Morocco, either shore I saw,  
And the Sardinian and each isle beside  
Which round that ocean bathes. Tardy with  
age

Were I and my companions, when we came  
To the strait pass, where Hercules ordained  
The boundaries not to be o'erstepped by man.

The walls of Seville to my right I left,  
On the other hand already Ceuta past.  
'O brothers!' I began, 'who to the west  
Through perils without number now have  
reached;

To this the short remaining watch, that yet  
Our senses have to wake, refuse not proof  
Of the unpeopled world, following the track  
Of Phœbus. Call to mind from whence ye  
sprang:

Ye were not formed to live the life of brutes,  
But virtue to pursue and knowledge high.'  
With these few words I sharpened for the  
voyage

The mind of my associates, that I then  
Could scarcely have withheld them. To the  
dawn

Our poop we turned, and for the witless flight  
Made our oars wings, still gaining on the left.  
Each star of the other pole night now beheld,  
And ours so low, that from the ocean floor  
It rose not. Five times re-illumed, as oft  
Vanished the light from underneath the moon,  
Since the deep way we entered, when from  
far

Appeared a mountain dim, loftiest methought  
Of all I e'er beheld. Joy seized us straight;  
But soon to mourning changed. From the  
new land

A whirlwind sprung, and at her foremost side  
Did strike the vessel. Thrice it whirled her  
round

With all the waves; the fourth time lifted up  
The poop, and sank the prow; so fate decreed:  
And over us the booming billow closed."

## CANTO XXVII.

## ARGUMENT.

The Poet, treating of the same punishment as in the last Canto, relates that he turned towards a flame in which was the Count Guido da Montefeltro, whose inquiries respecting the state of Romagna he answers; and Guido is thereby induced to declare who he is, and why condemned to that torment.

Now upward rose the flame, and stilled its  
light

To speak no more, and now passed on with  
leave

From the mild poet gained; when following  
came

Another, from whose top a sound confused,  
Forth issuing, drew our eyes that way to look.

As the Sicilian bull, that rightfully  
His cries first echoed who had shaped its  
mould,

Did so rebellow, with the voice of him  
Tormented, that the brazen monster seemed  
Pierced through with pain; thus, while no way  
they found,

Nor avenue immediate through the flame,  
Into its language turned the dismal words:  
But soon as they had won their passage forth,  
Up from the point, which vibrating obeyed  
Their motion at the tongue, these sounds were  
heard:

"O thou! to whom I now direct my voice,

That lately didst exclaim in Lombard phrase,  
'Depart thou; I solicit thee no more;' Though  
somewhat tardy I perchance arrive,  
Let it not irk thee here to pause awhile,  
And with me parley: lo! it irks not me,  
And yet I burn. If but e'en now thou fall  
Into this blind world, from that pleasant land  
Of Latium, whence I draw my sum of guilt,  
Tell me if those who in Romagna dwell  
Have peace or war. For of the mountains  
there

Was I, betwixt Urbino and the height  
Whence Tiber first unlocks his mighty flood."

Leaning I listened yet with heedful ear,  
When, as he touched my side, the leader thus:  
"Speak thou: he is a Latian." My reply  
Was ready, and I spake without delay:  
"O spirit! who art hidden here below,  
Never was thy Romagna without war  
In her proud tyrants' bosoms, nor is now:  
But open war there left I none. The state,  
Ravenna hath maintained this many a year,  
Is steadfast. There Polenta's eagle broods;  
And in his broad circumference of plume  
O'ershadows Cervia. The green talons grasp  
The land, that stood erewhile the proof so long  
And piled in bloody heap the host of France.

"The old mastiff of Verruchio and the young,  
That tore Montagna in their wrath, still make,  
Where they are wont, an auger of their fangs.

"Lamone's city, and Santerno's, range  
Under the lion of the snowy lair,  
Inconstant partisan, that changeth sides,  
Or ever summer yields to winter's frost.

And she, whose flank is washed of Savio's  
wave,

As 'twixt the level and the steep she lies,  
Lives so 'twixt tyrant power and liberty.

"Now tell us, I entreat thee, who art thou:  
Be not more hard than others. In the world,  
So may thy name still rear its forehead high."

Then roared awhile the fire, its sharpened  
point

On either side waved, and thus breathed at  
last:

"If I did think my answer were to one  
Who ever could return unto the world,  
This flame should rest unshaken. But since  
ne'er,

If true be told me, any from this depth  
Has found his upward way, I answer thee,  
Nor fear lest infamy record the words.

"A man of arms at first, I clothed me then  
In good Saint Francis' girdle, hoping so  
To have made amends. And certainly my hope  
Had failed not, but that he, whom curses light  
on,

The high priest again seduced me into sin.  
And how, and wherefore, listen while I tell.  
Long as this spirit moved the bones and pulp  
My mother gave me, less my deeds bespake  
The nature of the lion than the fox.

All ways of winding subtlety I knew,  
And with such art conducted, that the sound  
Reached the world's limit. Soon as to that  
part

Of life I found me come, when each behooves  
To lower sails and gather in the lines;



That, which before had pleased me, then I  
rued.

And to repentance and confession turned,  
Wretch that I was; and well it had bested me.  
The chief of the new Pharisees meantime,  
Waging his warfare near the Lateran,  
Not with the Saracens or Jews, (his foes  
All Christians were, nor against Acre one  
Had fought, nor trafficked in the Soldan's  
land,)

He, his great charge nor sacred ministry.  
In himself revered, nor in me that cord  
Which used to mark with leanness whom it  
girded.

As in Soracte, Constantine besought,  
To cure his leprosy, Sylvester's aid;  
So me, to cure the fever of his pride,  
This man besought: my counsel to that end  
He asked; and I was silent; for his words  
Seemed drunken: but forthwith he thus resumed:

'From thy heart banish fear: of all offence  
I hitherto absolve thee. In return,  
Teach me my purpose so to execute,  
That Penestrino cumber earth no more,  
Heaven, as thou knowest, I have power to shut  
And open: and the keys are therefore twain,  
The which my predecessor meanly prized.'

"Then, yielding to the forceful arguments,  
Of silence as more perilous I deemed,  
And answered: 'Father! since thou washes  
me

Clear of that guilt wherein I now must fall,

Large promise with performance scant, be  
sure,

Shall make thee triumph in thy lofty seat.'

"When I was numbered with the dead, then  
came

Saint Francis for me; but a cherub dark  
He met, who cried, 'Wrong me not, he is mine,  
And must below to join the wretched crew,  
For the deceitful counsel which he gave.  
E'er since I watched him, hovering at his hair.  
No power can the impenitent absolve;  
Nor to repent, and will, at once consist,  
By contradiction absolute forbid.'

Oh misery! how I shook myself when he  
Seized me, and cried, "Thou haply tought'st me  
not

A disputant in logic so exact!"

To Minos down he bore me; and the judge  
Twined eight times round his callous back the  
tail,

Which biting with excess of rage, he spake:  
'This is a guilty soul, that in the fire  
Must vanish.' Hence, perdition-doomed, I rove  
A prey to rankling sorrow, in this garb."

When he had thus fulfilled his words, the  
flame

In dolor parted, beating to and fro,  
And writhing its sharp horn. We onward  
went,

I and my leader, up along the rock  
Far as another arch, that overhangs  
The foss, wherein the penalty is paid  
Of those who load them with committed sin.

## CANTO XXVIII.

Who, e'en in words unfettered, might at full  
Tell of the wounds and blood that now I saw,  
Though he repeated oft the tale? No tongue  
So vast a theme could equal, speech and  
thought

Both impotent alike. If in one band  
Collected, stood the people all, who e'er  
Poured on Apulia's happy soil their blood,  
Slain by the Trojans, and in that long war,  
When of the rings the measured booty made  
A pile so high, as Rome's historian writes  
Who errs not; with the multitude, that felt  
The griding force of Guiscard's Norman steel,  
And those the rest, whose bones are gathered  
yet

At Ceperano, there where treachery  
Branded the Apulian name, or where beyond  
Thy walls, O Tagliacozzo, without arms  
The old Alardo conquered; and his limbs  
One were to show transpierced, another his  
Clean lopt away; a spectacle like this  
Were but a thing of naught, to the hideous  
sight

Of the ninth chasm. A rundlet, that hath lost  
Its middle or side stave, gaps not so wide  
As one I marked, torn from the chin through-  
out

Down to the hinder passage: 'twixt the legs  
Dangling his entrails hung, the midriff lay  
Open to view, and wretched ventricle,

That turns the englutted aliment to dross.

Whilst eagerly I fix on him my gaze,  
He eyed me, with his hands laid his breast  
bare,

And cried, "Now mark how I do rip me: lo!  
How is Mohammed mangled: before me  
Walks Ali weeping, from the chin his face  
Cleft to the forelock; and the others all,  
Whom here thou seest, while they lived, did  
sow

Scandal and schism, and therefore thus are rent.  
A fiend is here behind, who with his sword  
Hacks us thus cruelly, slivering again  
Each of this ream, when we have compast round  
The dismal way; for first our gashes close  
Ere we repass before him. But, say who  
Art thou, that standest musing on the rock,  
Haply so lingering to delay the pain  
Sentenced upon thy crimes."—"Him death not  
yet,"

My guide rejoined, "hath overta'en, nor sin  
Conducts to torment; but, that he may make  
Full trial of your state, I who am dead  
Must through the depths of hell, from orb to  
orb,  
Conduct him. Trust my words; for they are  
true."

More than a hundred spirits, when that they  
heard,

Stood in the foss to mark me, through amaze  
Forgetful of their pangs, "Thou, who perchance  
Shalt shortly view the sun, this warning thou  
Bear to Dolcino: bid him, if he wish not,  
Here soon to follow me, that with good store  
Of food he arm him, lest imprisoning snows

Yield him a victim to Novara's power;  
No easy conquest else:" with foot upraised  
For stepping, spake Mohammed, on the ground  
Then fixed it to depart. Another shade,  
Pierced in the throat, his nostrils mutilate  
E'en from beneath the eyebrows, and one ear  
Lopt off, who, with the rest, through wonder  
stood

Gazing, before the rest advanced, and bared  
His wind-pipe, that without was all o'er-smeared  
With crimson stain. "O thou!" said he, "whom  
sin

Condemns not, and whom erst (unless too near  
Resemblance do deceive me) I aloft  
Have seen on Latian ground, call thou to mind  
Piero of Medicina, if again  
Returning, thou behold'st the pleasant land  
That from Vercelli slopes to Mercabó;  
And there instruct the twain, whom Fano boasts  
Her worthiest sons, Guido and Angelo,  
That if 'tis given us here to scan aright  
The future, they out of life's tenement  
Shall be cast forth, and whelmed under the  
waves

Near to Cattolica, through perfidy  
Of a fell tyrant. 'Twixt the Cyprian isle  
And Balearic, ne'er hath Neptune seen  
An injury so foul, by pirates done,  
To Argive crew of old. That one-eyed traitor  
(Whose realm, there is a spirit here were fain  
His eye had still lacked sight of) them shall  
bring

To conference with him, then so shape his end,  
That they shall need not 'gainst Focara's wind  
Offer up vow nor prayer." I answering thus:

"Declare, as thou dost wish that I above  
May carry tidings of thee, who is he,  
In whom that sight doth wake such sad remembrance."

Forthwith he laid his hand on the cheek-bone  
Of one, his fellow-spirit, and his jaws  
Expanding, cried: "Lo! this is he I wot of:  
He speaks not for himself: the outcast this,  
Who overwhelmed the doubt in Caesar's mind,  
Affirming that delay to men prepared  
Was ever harmful." Oh! how terrified  
Methought was Curio, from whose throat was  
cut

The tongue, which spake that hardy word.

Then one,  
Maimed of each hand, uplifted in the gloom  
The bleeding stumps, that they with gory spots  
Sullied his face and cried: "Remember thee  
Of Mosca too; I who, alas! exclaimed,  
'The deed once done, there is an end,' that  
proved

A seed of sorrow to the Tuscan race."

I added: "Ay, and death to thine own tribe."

When, heaping woe on woe, he hurried off,  
As one grief-stung to madness. But I there  
Still lingered to behold the troop, and saw  
Thing, such as I may fear without more proof  
To tell of, but that conscience makes me firm,  
The boon companion, who her strong breast-  
plate

Buckles on him, that feels no guilt within,  
And bids him on and fear not. Without doubt  
I saw, and yet it seems to pass before me,  
A headless trunk, that even as the rest  
Of the sad flock paced onward. By the hair

It bore the severed member, lantern-wise  
Pendent in hand, which looked at us, and said,  
"Woe's me!" The spirit lighted thus himself;  
And two there were in one, and one in two.  
How that may be, he knows who ordereth so.

When at the bridge's foot direct he stood,  
His arm aloft he reared, thrusting the head  
Full in our view, that nearer we might hear  
The words, which thus it uttered: "Now behold  
This grievous torment, thou, who breathing  
go'st

To spy the dead: behold, if any else  
Be terrible as this. And that on earth  
Thou mayst bear tidings of me, know that I  
Am Bertrand, he of Born, who gave king John  
The counsel mischievous. Father and son  
I set at mutual war. For Absalom  
And David more did not Ahithophel,  
Spurring them on maliciously to strife.  
For parting those so closely knit, my brain  
Parted, alas! I carry from its source,  
That in this trunk inhabits. Thus the law  
Of retribution fiercely works in me."

## CANTO XXIX.

So were mine eyes inebriate with the view  
Of the vast multitude, whom various wounds  
Disfigured, that they longed to stay and weep.

But Virgil roused me: "What yet gazest on?  
Wherefore doth fasten yet thy sight below  
Among the maimed and miserable shades?  
Thou hast not shown in any chasm beside

This weakness. Know, if thou wouldst number  
them,

That two and twenty miles the valley winds  
Its circuit, and already is the moon  
Beneath our feet: the time permitted now  
Is short; and more, not seen, remains to see."

"If thou," I straight replied, "hadst weighed  
the cause,  
For which I looked, thou hadst perchance ex-  
cused

The tarrying still." My leader part pursued  
His way, the while I followed, answering him,  
And adding thus: "Within that cave I deem,  
Whereon so fixedly I held my ken,  
There is a spirit dwells, one of my blood,  
Wailing the crime that costs him now so dear."

Then spake my master: "Let thy soul no  
more  
Afflict itself for him. Direct elsewhere  
Its thought, and leave him. At the bridge's  
foot

I marked how he did point with menacing look  
At thee, and heard him by the others named  
Geri of Bello. Thou so wholly then  
Wert busied with his spirit, who once ruled  
The towers of Hautefort, that thou lookedst not  
That way, ere he was gone."—"O guide beloved!  
His violent death yet unavenged," said I,  
"By any, who are partners in his shame,  
Made him contemptuous; therefore, as I think,  
He passed me speechless by; and, doing so,  
Hath made me more compassionate his fate."

So we discoursed to where the rock first  
showed



The other valley, had more light been there,  
E'en to the lowest depth. Soon as we came  
O'er the last cloister in the dismal rounds  
Of Malebolge, and the brotherhood  
Were to our view exposed, then many a dart  
Of sore lament assailed me, headed all  
With points of thrilling pity, that I closed  
Both ears against the volley with mine hands.

As were the torment, if each lazar-house  
Of Valdichiana, in the sultry time  
'Twixt July and September, with the isle  
Sardinia and Maremma's pestilent fen,  
Had heaped their maladies all in one foss  
Together; such was here the torment: dire  
The stench, as issuing streams from festered  
limbs.

We on the utmost shore of the long rock  
Descended still to leftward. Then my sight  
Was livelier to explore the depth, wherein  
The minister of the most mighty Lord,  
All-searching Justice, dooms to punishment  
The forgers noted on her dread record.

More rueful was it not methinks to see  
The nation in Aegina droop, what time  
Each living thing e'en to the little worm,  
All fell, so full of malice was the air,  
(And afterward, as bards of yore have told,  
The ancient people were restored anew  
From seed of emmets,) than was here to see  
The spirits, that languished through the murky  
vale,

Up-piled on many a stack. Confused they lay,  
One o'er the belly, o'er the shoulders one  
Rolled of another; sidling crawled a third  
Along the dismal pathway. Step by step

We journeyed on, in silence looking round,  
And listening those diseased, who strove in vain  
To lift their forms. Then two I marked, that  
sat

Propt 'gainst each other, as two brazen pans  
Set to retain the heat. From head to foot,  
A tetter barked them round. Nor saw I e'er  
Groom currying so fast, for whom his lord  
Impatient waited, or himself perchance  
Tired with long watching, as of these each one  
Plied quickly his keen nails, through furious-  
ness

Of ne'er abated pruriency. The crust  
Came down from underneath in flakes, like  
scales

Scraped from the bream, or fish of broader  
mail.

"O thou! who with thy fingers rendest off  
Thy coat of proof," thus spake my guide to one,  
"And sometimes makest tearing pincers of  
them,

Tell me if any born of Latian land  
Be among these within: so may thy nails  
Serve thee for everlasting to this toil."

"Both are Latium," weeping he replied,  
"Whom tortured thus thou seest: but who art  
thou

That hast inquired of us?" To whom my guide:  
"One that descend with this man, who yet lives,  
From rock to rock, and show him hell's abyss."

Then started they asunder, and each turned  
Trembling toward us, with the rest, whose ear  
Those words redounding struck. To me my  
liege

Addressed him: "Speak to them what'er thou list."

And I therewith began: "So may no time  
Filch your remembrance from the thoughts of  
men

In the upper world, but after many suns  
Survive it, as ye tell me, who ye are,  
And of what race ye come. Your punishment,  
Unseemly and disgusting in its kind,  
Deter you not from opening thus much to me."

"Arezzo was my dwelling," answered one,  
"And me Albero of Siena brought  
To die by fire: but that, for which I died,  
Leads me not here. True is, in sport I told  
him,

That I had learned to wing my flight in air:  
And he, admiring much, as he was void  
Of wisdom, willed me to declare to him  
The secret of mine art; and only hence,  
Because I made him not a Daedalus,  
Prevailed on one supposed his sire to burn me.  
But Minos to this chasm, last of the ten,  
For that I practised alchemy on earth,  
Has doomed me. Him no subterfuge eludes."

Then to the bard I spake: "Was ever race  
Light as Siena's? Sure not France herself  
Can show a tribe so frivolous and vain."

The other leprous spirit heard my words,  
And thus returned: "Be Stricca from this  
charge

Exempted, he who knew so temperately  
To lay out fortune's gifts; and Niccolo,  
Who first the spice's costly luxury  
Discovered in that garden, where such seed  
Roots deepest in the soil: and be that troop

Exempted, with whom Caccia of Asciano  
Lavished his vineyards and wide spreading  
woods,

And his rare wisdom Abbagliato showed  
A spectacle for all. That thou mayst know  
Who seconds thee against the Sienese  
Thus gladly, bend this way thy sharpened sight,  
That well my face may answer to thy ken;  
So shalt thou see I am Capocchio's ghost,  
Who forged transmuted metals by the power  
Of Alchemy; and if I can scan thee right,  
Thou needs must well remember how I aped  
Creative nature by my subtle art."

### CANTO XXX.

What time resentment burned in Juno's breast  
For Semele against the Theban blood,  
As more than once in dire mischance was rued;  
Such fatal frenzy seized on Athamas,  
That he his spouse beholding with a babe  
Laden on either arm, "Spread out," he cried  
"The meshes, that I take the lioness  
And the young lions at the pass:" then forth  
Stretched he his merciless talons, grasping one,  
One helpless innocent, Learchus named,  
Whom swinging down he dashed upon a rock;  
And with her other burden, self-destroyed,  
The hapless mother plunged. And when the  
pride  
Of all presuming Troy fell from its height,  
By fortune overwhelmed, and the old king

With his realm perished; then did Hecuba,  
A wretch forlorn and captive, when she saw  
Polyxena first slaughtered, and her son,  
Her Polydorus, on the wild sea-beach  
Next met the mourner's view, then reft of sense  
Did she run barking even as a dog;  
Such mighty power had grief to wrench her  
soul.

But ne'er the Furies, or of Thebes, or Troy,  
With such fell cruelty were seen, their goads  
Infixing in the limbs of man or beast.

As now two pale and naked ghosts I saw,  
That gnarling wildly scampered, like the swine  
Excluded from his sty. One reached Capoc-  
chio,

And in the neck-joint sticking deep his fangs,  
Dragged him, that, o'er the solid pavement  
rubbed

His belly stretched out prone. The other shape,  
He of Arezzo, there left trembling, spake:

"That sprite of air is Schicchi; in like mood  
Of random mischief vents he still his spite."

To whom I answering: "Oh! as thou dost  
hope

The other may not flesh its jaws on thee,  
Be patient to inform us, who it is,  
Ere it speed hence."—"That is the ancient soul  
Of wretched Myrrha," he replied, "who burned  
With most unholy flame for her own sire,  
And a false shape assuming, so performed  
The deed of sin; e'en as the other there,  
That onward passes, dared to counterfeit  
Donati's features, to feigned testament  
The seal affixing, that himself might gain,  
For his own share, the lady of the herd."

When vanished the two furious shades, on  
whom

Mine eye was held, I turned it back to view  
The other cursed spirits. One I saw  
In fashion like a lute, had but the groin  
Been severed where it meets the forked part.  
Swoln dropsy, disproportioning the limbs  
With il-converted moisture, that the paunch  
Suits not the visage, opened wide his lips,  
Gasping as in the hectic man for drought,  
One towards the chin, the other upward curled.

"O ye! who in this world of misery,  
Wherefore I know not, are exempt from pain,"  
Thus he began, "attentively regard  
Adamo's woe. When living, full supply  
Ne'er lacked me of what most I coveted;  
One drop of water now, alas! I crave.  
The rills, that glitter down the grassy slopes  
Of Casentino, making fresh and soft  
The banks whereby they glide to Arno's stream,  
Stand ever in my view; and not in vain;  
For more the pictured semblance dries me up,  
Much more than the disease, which makes the  
flesh

Desert these shrivelled cheeks. So from the  
place,  
Where I transgressed, stern justice urging me,  
Takes means to quicken more my laboring  
sighs.

There is Romena, where I falsified  
The metal with the Baptist's form imprest,  
For which on earth I left my body burnt.  
But if I here might see the sorrowing soul  
Of Guido, Alessandro, or their brother,  
For Branda's limpid spring I would not change

The welcome sight. One is e'en now within,  
If truly the mad spirits tell, that round  
Are wandering. But wherein besteads me that?  
My limbs are fettered. Were I but so light,  
That I each hundred years might move one  
inch,

I had set forth already on this path,  
Seeking him out amidst the shapeless crew,  
Although eleven miles it wind, not less  
Than half of one across. They brought me  
down

Among this tribe; induced by them, I stamped  
The florins with three carats of alloy."

"Who are that abject pair," I next inquired,  
"That closely bounding thee upon thy right  
Lie smoking, like a hand in winter steeped  
In the chill stream?"—"When to this gulf I  
dropped,"

He answered, "here I found them; since that  
hour

They have not turned, nor ever shall, I ween,  
Till time hath run his course. One is that  
dame,

The false accuser of the Hebrew youth;  
Sinon the other, that false Greek from Troy.  
Sharp fever drains the reeky moistness out,  
In such a cloud upstreamed." When that he  
heard,

One, galied perchance to be so darkly named,  
With clenched hand smote him on the braced  
paunch,

That like a drum resounded: but forthwith  
Adamo smote him on the face, the blow  
Returning with his arm, that seemed as hard.

"Though my o'erweighty limbs have ta'en  
from me

The power to move," said he, "I have an arm  
At liberty for such employ." To whom  
Was answered: "When thou wentest to the fire,  
Thou hadst it not so ready at command,  
Then readier when it coined the impostor gold."

And thus the dropsied: "Ay, now speak'st  
thou true:

But there thou gavest not such true testimony,  
When thou wast questioned of the truth, at  
Troy."

"If I spake false, thou falsely stampedst the  
coin,"

Said Sinon: "I am here for but one fault,  
And thou for more than any imp beside."

"Remember," he replied, "O perjured one!  
The horse remember, that did teem with death;  
And all the world be witness to thy guilt."

"To thine," returned the Greek, "witness  
the thirst

Whence thy tongue cracks, witness the fluid  
mound

Reared by thy belly up before thine eyes,  
A mass corrupt." To whom the coiner thus:  
"Thy mouth gapes wide as ever to let pass  
Its evil saying. Me if thirst assails,  
Yet I am stuff with moisture. Thou art  
parched:

Pains rack thy head; no urging wouldst thou  
need

To make thee lap Narcissus' mirror up."

I was all fixed to listen, when my guide  
Admonished: "Now beware. A little more,  
And I do quarrel with thee." I perceived



How angrily he spake, and towards him turned  
With shame so poignant, as remembered yet  
Confounds me. As a man that dreams of  
harm

Befallen him, dreaming wishes it a dream,  
And that which is, desires as if it were not;  
Such then was I, who, wanting power to speak,  
Wished to excuse myself, and all the while  
Excused me, though unweeting that I did.  
"More grievous fault than thine has been, less  
shame,"

My master cried, "might expiate. Therefore  
cast

All sorrow from thy soul; and if again  
Chance bring thee where like conference is  
held,

Think I am ever at thy side. To hear  
Such wrangling is a joy for vulgar minds."

### CANTO XXXI.

THE very tongue, whose keen reproof before  
Had wounded me, that either cheek was  
stained,

Now ministered my cure. So have I heard,  
Achilles' and his father's javelin caused  
Pain first, and then the boon of health restored.

Turning our back upon the vale of woe,  
We crossed the encircled mound in silence.

There

Was less than day and less than night, that  
far

Mine eye advanced not: but I heard a horn  
Sounded so loud, the peal it rang had made  
The thunder feeble. Following its course  
The adverse way, my strained eyes were bent  
On that one spot. So terrible a blast  
Orlando blew not, when that dismal rout  
O'erthrew the host of Charlemagne, and  
quenched

His saintly warfare. Thitherward not long  
My head was raised, when many a lofty tower  
Methought I spied. "Master," said I, "what  
land

Is this?" He answered straight: "Too long  
a space

Of intervening darkness has thine eye  
To traverse; thou has therefore widely erred  
In thy imagining. Thither arrived  
Thou well shalt see, how distance can delude  
The sense. A little therefore urge thee on."

Then tenderly he caught me by the hand;  
"Yet know," said he, "ere further we advance,  
That it less strange may seem, these are not  
towers,

But giants. In the pit they stand immersed,  
Each from his navel downward, round the  
bank."

As when a fog disperseth gradually,  
Our vision traces what the mist involves  
Condensed in air; so piercing through the  
gross

And gloomy atmosphere, as more and more  
We neared toward the brink, mine error fled  
And fear came o'er me. As with circling  
round

Of turrets, Mentereggion crowns his walls;  
E'en thus the shore, encompassing the abyss,  
Was turreted with giants, half their length  
Uprearing, horrible, whom Jove from heaven  
Yet threatens, when his muttering thunder  
rolls

Of one already I descried the face,  
Shoulders, and breast, and of the belly huge  
Great part, and both arms down along his  
ribs.

All-teeming Nature, when her plastic hand  
Left framing of these monsters, did display  
Past doubt her wisdom, taking from mad War  
Such slaves to do his bidding; and if she  
Repent her not of the elephant and whale,  
Who ponders well confesses her therein  
Wiser and more discreet; for which brute  
force

And evil will are backed with subtlety,  
Resistance none avails. His visage seemed  
In length and bulk, as doth the pine that tops  
Saint Peter's Roman fane; and the other bones  
Of like proportion, so that from above  
The bank, which girdled him below, such height  
Arose his stature, that three Frieslanders  
Had striven in vain to reach but to his hair  
Full thirty ample palms was he exposed  
Downward from whence a man his garment  
loops.

"Raphel bai ameth, sabi almi:"

So shouted his fierce lips, which sweeter hymns  
Became not; and my guide addressed him thus:  
"O senseless spirit! let thy horn for thee  
Interpret: therewith vent thy rage, if rage

Or other passion wring thee. Search thy neck,  
There shalt thou find the belt that binds it on.  
Spirit confused! lo, on thy mighty breast  
Where hangs the baldrick!" Then to me he  
spake:

"He doth accuse himself. Nimrod is this,  
Through whose ill counsel in the world no more  
One tongue prevails. But pass we on, nor  
waste

Our words; for so each language is to him,  
As his to others, understood by none."

Then to the leftward turning sped we forth,  
And at a sling's throw found another shade  
Far fiercer and more huge. I cannot say  
What master hand had girt him; but he held  
Behind the right arm fettered, and before,  
The other, with a chain, that fastened him  
From the neck down; and five times round his  
form

Apparent met the wreathed links. "This proud  
one

Would of his strength against almighty Jove  
Make trial," said my guide: "whence he is  
thus

Requited: Ephialtes him they call.

Great was his prowess, when the giants brought  
Fear on the gods: those arms, which then he  
plied,

Now moves he never." Forthwith I returned:  
"Fain would I, if 'twere possible, mine eyes,  
Of Briareus immeasurable, gained  
Experience next." He answered: "Thou shalt  
see

Not far from hence Antaeus, who both speaks  
And is unfettered, who shall place us there

Where guilt is at its depth. Far onward stands  
Whom thou wouldst fain behold, in chains, and  
made

Like to this spirit, save that in his looks  
More fell he seems." By violent earthquake  
rocked

Ne'er shook a tower, so reeling to its base,  
As Ephialtes. More than ever then  
I dreaded death; nor than the terror more  
Had needed, if I had not seen the cords  
That held him fast. We straightway journey-  
ing on.

Came to Antaeus, who, five ells complete  
Without the head, forth issued from the cave.

"O thou, who in the fortunate vale, that  
made

Great Scipio heir of glory, when his sword  
Drove back the troop of Hannibal in flight,  
Who thence of old didst carry for thy spoil  
An hundred lions; and if thou hadst fought  
In the high conflict on thy brethren's side,  
Seems as men yet believed, that through thine  
arm

The sons of earth had conquered: now vouch-  
safe

To place us down beneath, where numbing cold  
Locks up Cocytus. Force not that we crave  
Or Tityus' help or Typhon's. Here is one  
Can give what in this realm ye covet. Stoop  
Therefore, nor scornfully distort thy lip.  
He in the upper world can yet bestow  
Renown on thee; for he doth live, and looks  
For life yet longer, if before the time  
Grace call him not unto herself." Thus spake

The teacher. He in haste forth stretched his  
hands

And caught my guide. Alcides whilom felt  
That grapple, straitened sore. Soon as my  
guide

Had felt it, he bespake me thus: "This way,  
That I may clasp thee;" then so caught me up,  
That we were both one burden. As appears  
The tower of Carisenda, from beneath  
Where it doth lean, if chance a passing cloud  
So sail across that opposite it hangs;  
Such then Antaeus seemed, as at mine ease  
I marked him stooping. I were fain at times  
To have past another way. Yet in the abyss,  
That Lucifer with Judas low ingulfs,  
Lightly he placed us; nor, there leaning, stayed;  
But rose, as in a bark the stately mast.

### CANTO XXXII.

COULD I command rough rhymes and hoarse, to  
suit

That hole of sorrow o'er which every rock  
His firm abutment rears, then might the vein  
Of fancy rise full springing: but not mine  
Such measures, and with faltering awe I touch  
The mighty theme; for to describe the depth  
Of all the universe, is no emprise  
To jest with, and demands a tongue not used  
To infant babbling. But let them assist  
My song, the tuneful maidens, by whose aid  
Amphion walled in Thebes; so with the truth  
My speech shall best accord. Oh ill-starred folk,  
Beyond all others wretched! who abide

In such a mansion, as scarce thought finds  
words

To speak of, better had ye here on earth  
Been flocks, or mountain goats. As down we  
stood

In the dark pit beneath the giants' feet,  
But lower far than they, and I did gaze  
Still on the lofty battlement, a voice  
Bespake me thus: "Look how thou walkest,  
Take

Good heed, thy soles do tread not on the heads  
Of thy poor brethren." Thereupon I turned,  
And saw before and underneath my feet  
A lake, whose frozen surface liker seemed  
To glass than water. Not so thick a veil  
In winter e'er hath Austrian Danube spread  
O'er his still course, nor Tanais far remote  
Under the chilling sky. Rolled o'er that mass  
Had Tabernich or Pietrapana fallen  
Not e'en its rim had creaked. As peeps the  
frog

Croaking above the wave, what time in dreams  
The village gleaner oft pursues her toils,  
So, to where modest shame appears, thus low,  
Blue pinched and shrined in ice the spirits  
stood,

Moving their teeth in shrill note like the stork.  
His face each downward held; their mouth the  
cold,

Their eyes expressed the dolor of their heart.

A space I looked around, then at my feet  
Saw two so strictly joined, that of their head  
The very hairs were mingled. "Tell me ye,  
Whose bosoms thus together press," said I

"Who are ye?" At that sound their necks they bent;

And when their looks were lifted up to me,  
Straightway their eyes, before all moist within,  
Distilled upon their lips, and the frost bound  
The tears betwixt those orbs, and held them there.

Plank unto plank hath never cramp closed up  
So stoutly. Whence, like two enraged goats,  
They clashed together: them such fury seized.

And one, from whom the bold both ears had reft,

Exclaimed, still looking downward: "Why on us

Dost speculate so long? If thou wouldst know  
Who are these two, the valley, whence his wave  
Bisenzio slopes, did for its master own  
Their sire Alberto, and next him themselves.  
They from one body issued: and throughout  
Caina thou mayst search, nor find a shade  
More worthy in congealment to be fixed;  
Not him, whose breast and shadow Arthur's hand

At that one blow dissevered; not Foccaccia;  
No, not this spirit, whose o'erjutting head  
Obstructs my onward view: he tore the name  
Of Mascheroni: Tuscan if thou be,  
Well knowest who he was. And to cut short  
All further question, in my form behold  
What once was Camiccione. I await  
Carlino here my kinsman, whose deep guilt  
Shall wash out mine." A thousand visages  
Then marked I, which the keen and eager cold  
Had shaped into a doggish grin; whence creeps  
A shivering horror o'er me, at the thought



Of those froze shallows. While we journeyed  
on

Toward the middle, at whose point unites  
All heavy substance, and I trembling went  
Through that eternal chillness, I know not  
If will it were, or destiny, or chance,  
But, passing 'midst the heads, my foot did strike  
With violent blow against the face of one.

"Wherefore dost bruise me?" weeping he ex-  
claimed,

"Unless thy errand be some fresh revenge  
For Montaperto, wherefore troublest me?"

I thus: "Instructor, now await me here,  
That I through him may rid me of my doubt:  
Thenceforth what haste thou wilt." The  
teacher paused

And to that shade I spake, who bitterly  
Still cursed me in his wrath. "What art thou,  
speak,

That railest thus on others?" He replied:

"Now who art thou, that smiting others'  
cheeks,

Through Antenora roamest, with such force  
As were past sufferance, wert thou living still?"

"And I am living, to thy joy perchance,"  
Was my reply, "if fame be dear to thee,  
That with the rest I may thy name enroll."

"The contrary of what I covet most,"

Said he, "thou tender'st; hence! nor vex me  
more.

Ill knowest thou to flatter in this vale."

Then seizing on his hinder scalp I cried:

"Name thee, or not a hair shall tarry here."

"Rend all away," he answered. "yet for that  
I will not tell, nor show thee, who I am,

Though at my head thou pluck a thousand times."

Now I had grasped his tresses, and stript off More than one tuft, he barking, with his eyes Drawn in and downward, when another cried, "What ails thee, Bocca? Sound not loud enough Thy chattering teeth, but thou must bark outright?"

What devil wrings thee?"—"Now," said I, "be dumb,

Accursed traitor! To thy shame, of thee True tidings will I bear."—"Off!" he replied; "Tell what thou list: but, as thou scape from hence,

To speak of him whose tongue hath been so glib,

Forget not: here he wails the Frenchman's gold.

'Him of Duera,' thou canst say, 'I marked, Where the starved sinners pine.' If thou be asked

What other shade was with them, at thy side Is Beccaria, whose red gorge disdained

The biting axe of Florence. Further on,

If I misdeem not, Soldanieri bides,

With Ganelon, and Tribaldello, him

Who oped Faenza when the people slept,"

We now had left him, passing on our way,

When I beheld two spirits by the ice

Pent in one hollow, that the head of one

Was cowl unto the other; and as bread

Is ravened up through hunger, the uppermost

Did so apply his fangs to the other's brain,

Where the spine joins it. Not more furiously

On Menalippus' temples Tydeus gnawed,  
Than on that skull and on its garbage he.

"O thou! who show'st so beastly sign of  
hate

'Gainst him thou prey'st on, let me hear," said  
I,

"The cause, on such condition, that if right  
Warrant thy grievance, knowing who ye are,  
And what the color of his sinning was,  
I may repay thee in the world above,  
If that, wherewith I speak, be moist so long."

### CANTO XXXIII.

HIS jaws uplifting from their fell repast,  
That sinner wiped them on the hairs o' the  
head,

Which he behind had mangled, then began:

"Thy will obeying, I call up afresh

Sorrow past cure; which, but to think of,  
wrings

My heart, or ere I tell on't. But if words,  
That I may utter, shall prove seed to bear  
Fruit of eternal infamy to him,

The traitor whom I gnaw at, thou at once  
Shalt see me speak and weep. Who thou mayst  
be

I know not, nor how here below art come:

But Florentine thou seemest of a truth,

When I do hear thee. Know, I was on earth  
Count Ugolino, and the Archbishop he,  
Ruggieri. Why I neighbor him so close,

Now list. That through effect of his ill  
thoughts

In him my trust reposing, I was ta'en

And after murdered, need is not I tell.

What therefore thou canst not have heard, that  
is,

How cruel was the murder, shalt thou hear,

And know if he have wronged me. A small  
grate

Within that mew, which for my sake the name

Of famine bears, where others yet must pine,

Already through its opening several moons

Had shown me, when I slept the evil sleep

That from the future tore the curtain off.

This one, methought, as master of the sport,

Rode forth to chase the gaunt wolf, and his  
whelps,

Unto the mountain which forbids the sight

Of Lucca to the Pisan. With lean brachs

Inquisitive and keen, before him ranged

Lanfranchi with Sismondi and Gualandi.

After short course the father and the sons

Seemed tired and lagging, and methought I saw

The sharp tusks gore their sides. When I  
awoke,

Before the dawn, amid their sleep I heard

My sons (for they were with me) weep and  
ask

For bread. Right cruel art thou, if no pang

Thou feel at thinking what my heart foretold;

And if not now, why use thy tears to flow?

Now had they wakened; and the hour drew  
near

When they were wont to bring us food; the  
mind

Of each misgave him through his dream, and I  
Heard, at its outlet underneath locked up  
The horrible tower: whence, uttering not a  
word,

I looked upon the visage of my sons.  
I wept not: so all stone I felt within.  
They wept: and one, my little Anselm, cried:  
'Thou lookest so! Father, what ails thee?'  
Yet I shed no tear, nor answered all that day  
Nor the next night, until another sun  
Came out upon the world. When a faint beam  
Had to our doleful prison made its way,  
And in four countenances I descried  
The image of my own, on either hand  
Through agony I bit; and they, who thought  
I did it through desire of feeding, rose  
O' the sudden, and cried, 'Father, we should  
grieve

Far less, if thou wouldst eat of us: thou gavest  
These weeds of miserable flesh we wear;  
And do thou strip them off from us again.'  
Then, not to make them sadder, I kept down  
My spirit in stillness. That day and the next  
We all were silent. Ah, obdurate earth!  
Why open'dst not upon us? When we came  
To the fourth day, then Gaddo at my feet  
Outstretched did fling him, crying, 'Hast no  
help

For me, my father!' There he died; and e'en  
Plainly as thou seest me, saw I the three

Fall one by one 'twixt the fifth day and the sixth;

Whence I betook me, now grown blind, to grope

Over them all, and for three days aloud  
Called on them who were dead. Then, fasting  
got

The mastery of grief." Thus having spoke,  
Once more upon the wretched skull his teeth  
He fastened like a mastiff's 'gainst the bone,  
Firm and unyielding. Oh, thou Pisa! shame  
Of all the people, who their dwelling make  
In that fair region, where the Italian voice  
Is heard; since that thy neighbors are so slack  
To punish, from their deep foundations rise  
Capraia and Gorgona, and dam up  
The mouth of Arno; that each soul in thee  
May perish in the waters. What if fame  
Reported that thy castles were betrayed  
By Ugolino, yet no right hadst thou  
To stretch his children on the rack. For them,  
Brigata, Uguccione, and the pair  
Of gentle ones, of whom my song hath told,  
Their tender years, thou modern Thebes, did  
make

Uncapable of guilt. Onward we passed,  
Where others, scarfed in rugged folds of ice,  
Not on their feet were turned, but each re-  
versed.

There, very weeping suffers not to weep;  
For, at their eyes, grief, seeking passage, finds  
Impediment, and rolling inward turns

For increase of sharp anguish: the first tears  
Hang clustered, and like crystal visors show,  
Under the socket brimming all the cup.

Now though the cold had from my face dis-  
lodged

Each feeling, as 'twere callous, yet meseemed  
Some breath of wind I felt. "Whence cometh  
this,"

Said I, "my Master? Is not here below  
All vapor quenched?"—"Thou shalt be speed-  
ily,"

He answered, "where thine eyes shall tell thee  
whence,

The cause descrying of this airy shower."

Then cried out one, in the chill crust who  
mourned:

"O souls! so cruel, that the farthest post  
Hath been assigned you, from this face remove  
The hardened veil; that I may vent the grief  
Impregnate at my heart, some little space,  
Ere it congeal again." I thus replied:

"Say who thou wast, if thou wouldst have  
mine aid;

And if I extricate thee not, far down  
As to the lowest ice may I descend."

"The friar Alberigo," answered he,

"Am I, who from the evil garden plucked  
Its fruitage, and am here repaid, the date  
More luscious for my fig."—"Hah!" I ex-  
claimed,

"Art thou too dead?"—"How in the world aloft  
It fareth with my body," answered he,

"I am right ignorant. Such privilege  
Hath Ptolomea, that oft-times the soul  
Drops hither, ere by Atropos divorced.  
And that thou mayst wipe out more willingly  
The glazed tear-drops that o'erlay mine eyes,  
Know that the soul, that moment she betrays,  
As I did, yields her body to a fiend  
Who after moves and governs it at will,  
Till all its time be rounded: headlong she  
Falls to this cistern. And perchance above  
Doth yet appear the body of a ghost,  
Who bear behind me winters. Him thou  
know'st,

If thou but newly art arrived below.  
The years are many that have past away,  
Since to this fastness Branca Doria came."

"Now," answered I, "methinks thou mockest  
me,  
For Branca Doria never yet hath died,  
But doth all natural functions of a man,  
Eats, drinks, and sleeps, and putteth raiment  
on,"

He thus: "Not yet unto that upper foss  
By th' evil talons guarded, where the pitch,  
Tenacious boils, had Michel Zanche reached,  
When this one left a demon in his stead  
In his own body, and of one his kin,  
Who with him treachery wrought. But now  
put forth  
Thy hand, and ope mine eyes." I oped them  
not.

Ill manners were best courtesy to him.



Ah Genoese! men perverse in every way,  
With every foulness stained, why from the  
earth

Are ye not cancelled? Such an one of yours  
I with Romagna's darkest spirit found,  
As, for his doings, even now in soul  
Is in Cocytus plunged, and yet doth seem  
In body still alive upon the earth.

## CANTO XXXIV.

"The banners of Hell's Monarch do come forth  
Toward us; therefore look," so spake my guide,  
"If thou discern him." As, when breathes a  
cloud

Heavy and dense, or when the shades of night  
Fall on our hemisphere, seems viewed from far  
A windmill, which the blast stirs briskly  
round;

Such was the fabric then methought I saw.

To shield me from the wind, forthwith I  
drew

Behind my guide: no covert else was there.

Now came I (and with fear I bid my strain  
Record the marvel) where the souls were all  
Whelmed underneath, transparent, as through  
glass

Pellucid the frail stem. Some prone were laid;  
Others stood upright, this upon the soles,

That on his head, a third with face to feet  
Arched like a bow. When to the point we  
came,

Whereat my guide was pleased that I should  
see

The creature eminent in beauty once,  
He from before me stepped and made me  
pause.

"Lo!" he exclaimed, "lo Dis; and lo the place,  
Where thou hast need to arm thy heart with  
strength."

How frozen and how faint I then became,  
Ask me not, reader! for I write it not;  
Since words would fail to tell thee of my state.  
I was not dead nor living. Think thyself,  
If quick conception work in thee at all,  
How I did feel. That emperor, who sways  
The realm of sorrow, at mid breast from the  
ice

Stood forth; and I in stature am more like  
A giant, than the giants are his arms.  
Mark now how great that whole must be,  
which suits

With such a part. If he were beautiful  
As he is hideous now, and yet did dare  
To scowl upon his Maker, well from him  
May all our misery flow. Oh what a sight!  
How passing strange it seemed, when I did  
spy

Upon his head three faces: one in front  
Of hue vermilion, the other two with this  
Midway each shoulder joined and at the crest;

The right 'twixt wan and yellow seemed; the  
left

To look on, such as come from whence old  
Nile

Stoops to the lowlands. Under each shot forth  
Two mighty wings, enormous as became  
A bird so vast. Sails never such I saw  
Outstretched on the wide sea. No plumes had  
they.

But were in texture like a bat; and these  
He flapped i' th' air, that from him issued still  
Three winds, wherewith Cocytus to its depth  
Was frozen. At six eyes he wept: the tears  
Adown three chins distilled with bloody foam.  
At every mouth his teeth a sinner champed,  
Bruised as with ponderous engine; so that  
three

Were in this guise tormented. But far more  
Than from that gnawing, was the foremost  
panged

By the fierce rending, whence oft-times the  
back

Was stript of all its skin. "That upper spirit,  
Who hath worst punishment," so spake my  
guide,

"Is Judas, he that hath his head within  
And plies the feet without. Of th' other two,  
Whose heads are under, from the murky jaw  
Who hangs, is Brutus: lo! how he doth writhe  
And speaks not. The other, Cassius, that ap-  
pears

So large of limb. But night now re-ascends;

And it is time for parting. All is seen."

I clipped him round the neck; for so he bade:

And noting time and place, he, when the wings  
Enough were oped, caught fast the shaggy  
sides,

And down from pile to pile descending stepped  
Between the thick fell and the jagged ice.

Soon as he reached the point, whereat the  
thigh

Upon the swelling of the haunches turns,  
My leader there, with pain and struggling  
hard,

Turned round his head where his feet stood  
before,

And grappled at the fell as one who mounts;  
That into hell methought we turned again.

"Except that by such stairs as these," thus  
spake

The teacher, panting like a man forespent,

"We must depart from evil so extreme:"

Then at a rocky opening issued forth,

And placed me on the brink to sit, next joined  
With wary step my side. I raised mine eyes,  
Believing that I Lucifer should see

Where he was lately left, but saw him now  
With legs held upward. Let the grosser sort,  
Who see not what the point was I had passed,  
Bethink them if sore toil oppressed me then.

"Arise," my master cried, "upon thy feet.  
The way is long, and much uncouth the road;  
And now within one hour and half of noon

The sun returns." It was no palace-hall  
Lofty and luminous wherein we stood,  
But natural dungeon where ill-footing was  
And scant supply of light. "Ere from the  
abyss

I separate," thus when risen I began:

"My guide! vouchsafe few words to set me  
free

From error's thralldom. Where is now the ice?  
How standeth he in posture thus reversed?  
And how from eve to mourn in space so brief  
Hath the sun made his transit?" He in few  
Thus answering spake: "Thou deemest thou  
art still

On the other side the centre, where I grasped  
The abhorred worm that boreth through the  
world.

Thou wast on the other side, so long as I  
Descended: when I turned, thou didst o'erpass  
That point, to which from every part is dragged  
All heavy substance. Thou are now arrived  
Under the hemisphere opposed to that,  
Which the great continent doth overspread,  
And underneath whose canopy expired  
The Man, that was born sinless and so lived.  
Thy feet are planted on the smallest sphere,  
Whose other aspect is Judecca. Morn  
Here rises, when there evening sets: and he,  
Whose shaggy pile we scaled, yet standeth  
fixed,

As at the first. On this part he fell down

From heaven; and th' earth, here prominent  
before,

Through fear of him did veil her with the sea,  
And to our hemisphere retired. Perchance,  
To shun him, was the vacant space left here,  
By what of firm land on this side appears,  
That sprang aloof." There is a place beneath,  
From Belzbub as distant, as extends  
The vaulted tomb; discovered not by sight,  
But by the sound of brooklet, that descends  
This way along the hollow of a rock,  
Which, as it winds with no precipitous course,  
The wave hath eaten. By that hidden way  
My guide and I did enter, to return  
To the fair world: and heedless of repose  
We climbed, he first, I following his steps,  
Till on our view the beautiful lights of heaven  
Dawned through a circular opening in the  
cave;

Thence issuing we again beheld the stars.

THE END

